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EUROPE
& PACIFIC
WEEKEND
EDITION

EXPRESS YOURSELF

Face masks have become a fact of life, and they have meanings beyond just function and fashion

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STARS AND STRIPES[®]

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VIRUS OUTBREAK

Recruiting in the time of coronavirus

Despite deep cuts into numbers, officials say changes likely to stay

By **COREY DICKSTEIN**
Stars and Stripes

Staff Sgt. Riley Krebsbach still makes the same recruiting pitch to sell young Americans on the U.S. Army despite the current coronavirus outbreak, but his delivery is drastically different.

Face-to-face meetings with potential recruits have been replaced by long hours on a computer and smartphone — searching for and chatting with prospects in a safe digital environment. Instead of working from his Moreno Valley recruiting station in southern California, visiting local high schools and canvassing community events to explain the benefits that come with Army service, Krebsbach now posts messages on social media and interviews prospects via video conferencing services from his home.

Because of social distancing, recruiters faced a sudden shift to telework and digital prospecting, which Krebsbach said was challenging. But it has led them to rethink the art of recruiting and find innovative ways to connect. The outbreak could have lasting impact on the way the military fills its ranks.

SEE RECRUITING ON PAGE 4

Staff Sgt. Elysia Wilson, a production recruiter with the 168th Wing, helps enlist a new recruit using a video conference call April 16 at Eielson Air Force Base, Alaska. This virtual enlistment allowed a new Alaska Air National Guard recruit to complete their oath of enlistment while complying with COVID-19 safety regulations.

SHANNON CHACE
U.S. Air National Guard

Claims for jobless aid in US climb to 36 million

By **CHRISTOPHER RUGABER**
Associated Press

WASHINGTON — Nearly 3 million laid-off workers applied for U.S. unemployment benefits last week as the viral outbreak led more companies to slash jobs even though most states have begun to let some businesses reopen under certain restrictions.

Roughly 36 million people have now filed for jobless aid in the two months since the coronavirus first forced millions of businesses to close their doors and shrink their workforces, the Labor Department said Thursday.

Still, the number of first-time applications has now declined for six straight weeks, suggesting that a dwindling number of companies are reducing their payrolls.

By historical standards, the latest tally shows that the number of weekly jobless claims remains enormous, reflecting an economy that is sinking into a severe downturn. Last week's pace of new applications for aid was still four times the record high that prevailed before the coronavirus struck hard in March.

Jobless workers in some states are still reporting difficulty applying for or receiving benefits. These include freelance, gig and self-employed workers, who became newly eligible for jobless aid this year.

The states that are now easing lockdowns are doing so in varied ways. Ohio has permitted warehouses, most offices, factories, and construction companies to reopen, but restaurants and bars remain closed for indoor sit-down service.

SEE JOBLESS ON PAGE 10

■ Online: Get the latest on the virus outbreak
[stripes.com/coronavirus](#)

EXCHANGE RATES

Military rates		Switzerland (Franc)...	0.9739
Euro costs (May 15) ...	\$1.05	Thailand (Baht) ...	32.13
Dollar buys (May 15) ...	0.9028	Turkey (Lira) ...	6.964
British pound (May 15) ...	\$1.19		
US dollar (May 15) ...	\$1.17		
South Korean won (May 15) ...	\$1.18		

Commercial rates	
Bahrain (Dinar) ...	0.3735
China (Yuan) ...	6.1172
Canada (Dollar) ...	64.19
China (Yuan) ...	6.1102
Denmark (Krone) ...	7.9321
Spain (Peseta) ...	166.64
Hong Kong (Dollar) ...	\$1.0790-0.9256
Europe (Euro) ...	7.7567
France (Franc) ...	236.68
Israel (Shekel) ...	3.5492
Japan (Yen) ...	106.91
Kuwait (Dinar) ...	0.3094
Norway (Krone) ...	10.5551
Philippines (Peso) ...	50.269
Poland (Zloty) ...	4.24
Saudi Arabia (Riyal) ...	1.4752
Singapore (Dollar) ...	1.3621
South Africa (Rand) ...	3.7623
3-month bill ...	0.13
30-year bond ...	0.013

Military exchange rates are those available to customers at military banking facilities in the country of issuance for Japan, South Korea, Germany, the Netherlands and the United Kingdom. For nonlocal currency exchange rates (i.e., purchasing British pounds in Germany), check with your local military banking facility. Commercial rates are interbank rates provided for reference when buying currency. Figures are quoted in dollars to one dollar, except for the British pound, which is represented in dollars-to-pound, and the euro, which is dollars-to-euro.)

INTEREST RATES

Prime rate ...	3.25
Discount rate ...	2.25
Federal funds market rate ...	0.05
3-month bill ...	0.13
30-year bond ...	0.013

SATURDAY IN THE PACIFIC

CHINA RUSSIA

N. KOREA

Seoul 61/57

S. KOREA

Osan 63/57

Busan 70/60

Sasebo 69/65

Okinawa 78/74

Sea of Japan

Iwakuni 64/59

JAPAN

Tokyo 63/59

Misawa 58/50

Pacific Ocean

Philippine Sea

Guam 84/80

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PacificAdvertising@stripes.com CML +81 (42) 552.2511 ext. 77313
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MIDEAST

Burials, shock after Afghan hospital attack

By SHARIF HASSAN
AND SUSANNAH GEORGE
The Washington Post

KABUL, Afghanistan — Hajar Sarwari was in labor with her second child at a western Kabul maternity ward on Tuesday morning when gunmen shot her twice in the abdomen, killing her and her unborn child.

Sarwari's family buried her atop a hill under overcast skies on the outskirts of the Afghan capital Wednesday morning, one day after three gunmen killed 24 people in a Doctors Without Borders maternity ward. The baby remained in her womb.

"There's no humanity left in this country," said Sarwari's husband, Mohammad Hussain Yaqoobi, his speech slow and halting. He stood near his wife's grave, marked by a simple black headstone and a small mound of upturned earth. "The attackers had no conscience. How can they justify shooting dead innocent newborns and their mothers?"

The burial was one of many across Kabul on Wednesday morning. Hospital officials said the mothers of 10 newborns were among Tuesday's dead, as were those of two infants, pregnant women, nurses and a security guard. Sixteen were wounded.

More funerals were held about 100 miles to the east, in Nangarhar province. A suicide bombing there on Tuesday killed 32 and wounded 133. The attacker struck hours after the hospital rampage began and targeted a funeral gathering for a prominent local security official. The Islamic State claimed responsibility.

The brutality of the attack on the maternity ward paired with the funeral bombing shocked Kabul and the country. The Taliban denied responsibility, but the militants have increased attacks on Afghan forces in



KIANA HAYEN/For The Washington Post

After Hajar and her unborn baby's burial, women gathered inside one room to console her mother, mother-in-law and sister and pay their respect to the family.

other parts of the country for weeks, inflicting heavy casualties. Afghan security officials linked that uptick in attacks to the Tuesday's attacks on civilians.

Afghan President Ashraf Ghani responded by directing his forces to resume offensive operations against the Taliban. The move marks a major setback to peace efforts in Afghanistan. The Taliban called Ghani's statement a "declaration of war."

Maintaining a defensive footing was intended as a goodwill gesture as Afghan government officials and Taliban leaders wrestled over how to begin direct peace talks. But the talks, mandated by the U.S.-Taliban peace deal signed in February, were repeatedly delayed for months over a controversial prisoner exchange and escalating violence.

The U.S. military command in Kabul said Wednesday that there had been no change in the posture of American troops in Afghanistan since Ghani's announcement.

"The established military-military communications channel [between the United States and the Taliban] continues to function as a conduit through which both sides can address concerns," according to a spokesman for U.S. forces who spoke on the condition of anonymity in line with departmental regulations.

In Kabul, families affected by the maternity ward attack tried to move forward Wednesday. At a hospital in western Kabul, newborns who had been rescued from Tuesday's shooting were reunited with relatives.

Outside one of the rooms, Khan Ali held

his child, with his wife by his side. She had given birth minutes before the attack, and both she and the baby girl escaped unharmed.

"God has given a second life for my wife and daughter," he said.

In a statement released Wednesday, Doctors Without Borders said it had "indications" that one of its employees was killed and that its health workers were following up with survivors.

"Every effort is being made by our medical team to follow up on the newborns in the maternity hospital to ensure the best possible care to our patients and to those injured, to provide psychological care to affected staff, and to provide every necessary support to those bereaved," the statement read.

At Sarwari's family home, relatives gathered to comfort the grieving and express their condolences.

"Have you ever heard that newborn babies were shot dead? This is the first I hear. It hasn't happened in any country around the world," said Mohammad Rahim Yousifi, a distant relative.

Sarwari's mother wept uncontrollably, supported by a group of women in long black robes. "Stop. You're already sick, don't cry anymore," one of the women begged.

Outside, Sarwari's 6-year-old daughter, Razia, played and giggled in the front garden.

No one had told her what had happened to her mother.

Rahila Yaqoobi, her aunt, said the young girl had been eager to go to the hospital with her mother. "I told her, 'Don't go, wait here. Mommy will bring a baby for you,'" she recalled and then began to cry.

"I don't know how to tell her that her mommy is dead," she said.

US military offers condolences over deadly Iran accident

Associated Press

DUBAI, United Arab Emirates — The U.S. military offered condolences Thursday to Iran over a friendly fire incident in the Islamic Republic that killed 19 of its troops, identifying the weapon used in the incident as an anti-ship cruise missile.

Iranian authorities on Monday said that a missile struck the Iranian navy vessel Konarak near the port of Jask, some 790

miles southeast of Tehran in the Gulf of Oman. Authorities said the Konarak was too close to a target and was accidentally hit Sunday in an incident that also wounded 15 troops.

In a statement, Capt. Bill Urban, a spokesman for the U.S. Central Command, said the force offered "our sincere condolences to the Iranian people for the tragic loss of life." However, Urban also criticized

the training for taking place so close to the Strait of Hormuz, the narrow mouth of the Persian Gulf through which 20% of all oil passes.

"While we are troubled that this mishap occurred in such close proximity to a high-trafficked international shipping lane and at a time when most of the region's focus is on the fight against COVID-19, the unnecessary loss of life is regrettable," he said.

Tensions had been expected to rise after Iran's government overcame the initial chaos that engulfed its response to the coronavirus pandemic. In April, the U.S. accused Iran of conducting "dangerous and harassing" maneuvers near American warships in the northern Persian Gulf. Iran also had been suspected of briefly seizing a Hong Kong-flagged oil tanker just before that.

Taliban truck bomb leaves at least 5 civilians dead in latest attack

By PHILLIP WALTER WELLMAN
Stars and Stripes

KABUL, Afghanistan — A Taliban truck bomb killed at least five civilians when it exploded near a military court in eastern Afghanistan on Thursday, continuing a series of bloody attacks that have put Afghan forces back on the offensive.

Five security officials and 15 civilians were also wounded by the blast in Garder, the capital of Paktia province, the Afghan Defense Ministry said in a statement.

"The area was crowded with civilians," Interior Ministry spokesman Tariq Aryan said in a phone interview.

The Taliban intended to attack the court building, but guards identified the explosives-laden vehicle before it reached the entrance and the blast detonated early, the defense ministry said.

The Taliban claimed responsibility for the bombing, which spokesman Zabihullah Mujahid said in a statement was a direct response to President Ashraf Ghani ordering Afghan troops Tuesday to resume offensive operations against the insurgents.

Ghani gave the order hours after an attack on a Kabul hospital killed 24, including at least two newborns. The Taliban denied involvement in the hospital shootings and in another attack that day that killed at least 32 at a funeral in Afghanistan province, which was later claimed by Islamic State. ISIS hasn't claimed the hospital attack, but it was in an area home to a large Shiite Hazara minority, who have frequently been the target of the militants' suicide bombings and raids.

Although Ghani's televised speech focused on the Taliban, his country's troops have continued to fight ISIS, which both

the Taliban and Afghan forces consider a foe.

As of Thursday afternoon, the Afghan military had yet to resume offensive attacks against the Taliban, said Rohullah Ahmadzai, a defense ministry spokesman. "You cannot go into action as soon as the president orders it," Ahmadzai said. "But we'll finish the planning and start physical operations very soon."

The U.S. expected the signing of the Feb. 29 peace deal with the Taliban in Qatar to bring a reduction in violence and formal talks that would bring about a comprehensive cease-fire.

Instead, the Taliban have ramped up their operations, officials from the U.S.-led NATO Resolute Support mission in the country told the Special Inspector General for Afghanistan Reconstruction, in a recent report to Congress. But the group had

refrained from attacking provincial centers, likely to avoid jeopardizing the agreement, the command said.

The Taliban has avoided attacking foreign forces, though coalition troops have supported their Afghan allies in defensive measures and continue to serve as advisers.

The resumption of Afghan offensive operations does not signal an end to the peace process, both Ghani and U.S. officials have said. The U.S. military continues to carry out an initial drawdown of troops from around 13,000 to 8,600 as called for in the deal. If the Taliban meet the expectations of the Feb. 29 agreement, foreign forces would complete their withdrawal by the middle of next year.

Zubair Babakar/khali contributed to this report.
wellman.phillip@stripes.com
Twitter: @pwwellman

VIRUS OUTBREAK

Recruiting: Military sees benefits in moving to digital enlistments

FROM FRONT PAGE

"The transition has been sort of an acquired skill set," said Krebsbach, 31, who spent seven years in the infantry before shifting two years ago to a temporary recruiting assignment that he hopes to make permanent. "Getting used to working from home — moving us into social media and virtual prospecting. It's not something we were very big on before, but we jumped right into it."

"I'm already sure it will be a big part of recruiting for our future," he said.

On March 18, the Army made an unprecedented decision in U.S. military recruiting history. The largest service shut down public access to its 1,400 recruiting stations. Krebsbach and others were ordered to telework when possible and target potential recruits online and by phone.

The other services quickly followed.

By March 25, when the Marine Corps announced it would shift prospecting efforts entirely to the virtual sphere, the Pentagon's recruiting force of more than 20,100 service members had ditched recruiting stations and offices.

The military cannot simply stop recruiting, even in the face of the world's worst health crisis in decades. It must bring young, healthy men and women into the services — more than 150,000 every year — to fill its ranks as others leave for civilian life.

Falling behind on recruiting has serious ripple effects.

For example, when the Army failed to meet its annual recruiting goal in 2018 for the first time since 2005, it was unable to meet its end-strength goal. That slowed the Army's ability to prepare for potential conflict with near-peer adversaries like China and Russia. Top service officials found that the Army's recruiting processes lagged decades behind in technology. Recruiters, Army leaders said, failed to target prized 17-to-24-year-olds where they were most likely to be found — sharing on social media and playing online video games.

The cost of corona

Despite the digital efforts, recruiting has suffered. All four services reported drops in the metrics that track progress on the recruiting front. In some cases, services fell short by thousands of new contacts with potential recruits. Others projected they would sign far fewer recruits to enlistment contracts amid the pandemic.

All of the services reported drastic declines in the number of recruits they sent into their initial recruiting pipeline.

The shift to full virtual recruiting cost Maj. Gen. Frank Muth, the Army's recruiting chief, and his team nearly two weeks of prospecting efforts.

He said he expects to face a shortfall by the end of May of about 3,100 recruits with signed contracts. His recruiters entered the pandemic with more than



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Staff assigned to Recruit Training Command process recruits as part of a preliminary health screening at Chicago O'Hare Airport in Chicago, Ill., on April 21.

2,000 signed contracts ahead of the short-term goals set by the Army.

"Even if we're behind 3,500, 3,800, I still think with all of the innovation we are doing and the morale of the recruiters right now and how much they want to get after it — I think we'll be able to make it," Muth said.

While the Army does not yet have a specific recruiting goal for fiscal year 2020, Muth expects the number to fall just shy of the 68,000 that his organization exceeded last year. Service officials earlier this year floated an unofficial 69,000 recruit goal, but better-than-expected retention rates among current soldiers have likely lowered expectations.

The other military services reported similar shortfalls in March as the pandemic spread. The Navy saw a 45% dip in qualified individuals expressing interest in March, compared to March 2019. The Navy's recruiting chief, Rear Adm. Dennis Velez, attributed the sharp drop almost entirely to the impact of the coronavirus.

"March was probably the peak month for shock value — no one wants to go outside, no one wants to do anything. I think that will probably be the high mark," Velez said from his office in Millington, Tenn. "I thoroughly believe as the country opens up we're going to see our numbers normalizing. But 45% is a significant number and something we are really looking at closely to make sure it doesn't become a trend."

Velez anticipates his recruiters' production surging in the summer months and his service meeting its original goal of 40,800 new recruits.

The Marine Corps lowered its goal for fiscal year 2020 by 2,000 amid the pandemic, aiming to ship 33,290 to basic training, said Gunnery Sgt. Justin Kronenberg, a spokesman for Marine Recruiting Command.

The service saw a drop of about 25% in contacts with qualified individuals in March over the same month last year.

Kronenberg described the pandemic's impacts on his service's recruiting efforts as "dramatic."

"Our systematic recruiting process has always placed a premium on 'kneecap to kneecap' interaction between a recruiter and applicant, so it may be challenging to replicate this physical assessment of those wanting to become Marines solely through tech mediums."

Air Force officials expressed similar reservations as they saw drops in recruiting metrics in March that continued into April. But despite those drops, the Air Force reported its recruiters so far in 2020 have outpaced their performance in 2019, produc-

ing 50,000 more qualified leads between January and April 2020 than in the first four months combined in 2019.

Based on that early success, service officials waived individual goals for its more than 1,800 recruiters. The overall goal remains to ship 29,068 recruits to basic training, according to Chrissy Cuttita, a spokeswoman for Air Force Recruiting Service.

'I knew we were ready'

Amid the outbreak, the services have streamlined once-clunky procedures to screen and process prospective recruits, developed innovative tactics to target those prospects, and proven that recruiting can be done without stations and offices.

"I think what we've realized is that for a lot of the basic stuff, we can do it working from home," said Tech. Sgt. Joshua Stanley, an Air Force recruiter based in Dover, Del. "It shows we really can almost get you ready to go to a [Military Entrance Processing Station] before we ever see you in person. I don't think we'd ever considered that before."

Krebsbach said he looks forward to returning to high schools and large events, but he'll con-

tinued to post daily workout videos and memes to Instagram and Facebook. He will keep targeting prospects through applications popular with younger people, like Snapchat, where he recently used a video feature to interview a potential recruit.

"I think it's actually a little easier to ask questions over the digital plane than face-to-face in person for some people," he said. "It can be intimidating sitting down in the office talking to someone in an Army uniform."

Muth, who heads the U.S. Army Recruiting Command in Fort Knox, Ky., was confident his recruiters could handle the challenge of virtual prospecting. His decision to shutter stations from the general public was about protecting his own people, he said.

"We saw where this thing was going, so we came out of the stations," he said. "We wanted to reduce the risk to our soldiers and their family members."

Muth, a helicopter pilot by trade, led Army recruiting into a digital-first effort that he believes has positioned his enterprise well to weather the pandemic.

"I knew we were ready to do this," Muth told Stars and Stripes. "Who would have thought that we would have had to exercise this at 100%?"

A new normal

Military leaders are already studying lessons learned from the sudden, drastic change to their recruiting model.

SEE PAGE 5

VIRUS OUTBREAK

FROM PAGE 4

It could result in the reorganization of recruiting teams, drastic shifts toward virtual prospecting and other major changes to the business.

Muth, who this week allowed a select few recruiting stations to reopen to the public in areas deemed at less risk for the virus, is developing plans to change daily operations for his Army recruiting force. The general does not want to see recruiters return to spending large portions of their time in stations.

Instead, he wants recruiters there only for specific purposes, using offices as hubs between outings within their communities or time spent virtually prospecting from home. He likened them to patrol bases, small military outposts where troops stop for water, food or supplies.

He called it a "new version of the old norm."

"I don't need to be in the recruiting station to be able to recruit," Muth said. "Does that mean that maybe they come into the patrol base every other day? And on those other days they are on their own — be it Starbucks or the high school or telecommuting from home."

The Army could close some of its smaller stations as its recruiters base themselves out of their vehicles, similar to the model used by many pharmaceutical representatives.

"I think it opens up a lot of pos-

sibilities for the future," Muth said.

Officials with other services could again follow the Army's example. The Navy has empowered its recruiters to do much of their business away from stations, said Velez, the service's recruiting chief.

"A recruiter right now has pretty much everything they need on a laptop," he said. "So, when they meet with the individuals, they can take biometrics, get signatures all right on the spot — so you don't need to meet in the [recruiting] building. You can meet someone in the Starbucks and do pretty much the entire process."

Recruiters said they were excited about some of the changes.

After the initial adjustment period in mid-March, Krebsbach said he pitched the Army to more people in the past month via social media than ever.

Master Sgt. Dana Bazile, an Air Force recruiting flight chief based in Pennsylvania, said she has seen innovation across the large group of recruiters she oversees.

"This is great opportunity to evaluate how we function on a day-to-day basis and eliminate wasted man hours," she said. "The ways that our recruiters are now using technology, social media — that will continue to increase greatly from what we were doing before. We're not going back, in that nature."

The bottom line, Velez said, the Navy — and the entire U.S. mili-



BROOKE C. WOODS/U.S. Marine Corps

New recruits with Echo Company, 2nd Recruit Training Battalion, respond to orders during receiving at Marine Corps Recruit Depot, San Diego, on May 4.

tary — is open for business and needs new, dedicated people to fill its ranks. Recruiting is a no-fail mission, he said.

Recruiters "understand how critical it is for us to get new sailors and recruits into the Navy,"

he said. "Because at the end of the day we have 90 plus ships at sea today — over one-third of our force is underway doing the nation's business, and ... if we fail at doing our part, some kid is going to stay at sea longer because we

can't get the right sailors through the schoolhouse to relieve him so he can get to shore duty and take a knee."

dickstein.corey@stripes.com
Twitter: @CDicksteinDC

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MILITARY

Tricare eliminates copays for telehealth

By NIKKI WENTLING
Stars and Stripes

WASHINGTON — The military's health insurance provider is covering telephone appointments and has eliminated copayments for telehealth services as of Wednesday.

The changes to Tricare will remain in effect through the national emergency, according to a new note posted on the Federal Register by Jonathan Woodson, assistant secretary of defense for

health affairs.

"These changes will reduce the spread of COVID-19 among Tricare beneficiaries by incentivizing use of telehealth services," the rule states.

The decision came after Sen. Jeanne Shaheen, D-N.H., and Sen. Martha McSally, R-Ariz., urged the Defense Health Agency to cover the full scope of telehealth services under Tricare. The senators, both of whom are veterans, particularly wanted to

expand service members' access to mental health care.

In a letter to the Defense Health Agency on May 4, the senators acknowledged that Medicare and Medicaid had lifted restrictions on telehealth and encouraged Tricare to follow suit.

"This is the right call — I'm glad Tricare heeded our concerns and rightly decided to expand coverage for telehealth services for military families at this critical time," Shaheen said in a state-

ment Wednesday. "This will allow military families to more easily check in with a doctor without unnecessary out-of-pocket expenses, which is especially important now that health advice and counseling is in such high demand and so necessary."

Existing regulations prevent Tricare from covering telephone appointments in most cases. The new rule posted to the Federal Register created an exemption during the coronavirus pan-

demic. The rule states that "it is imperative" to allow telephone appointments when medical providers deem it necessary.

With telehealth, Tricare typically requires medical providers to be licensed in the states where their patients live. During the pandemic, Tricare is relaxing its rules. Providers may be licensed in any U.S. state and allowed to treat patients across state lines.

wentling.nikki@stripes.com
Twitter: @nikkiwentling

Yongsan gives all-clear after probe of package

Stars and Stripes

SEOUL, South Korea — The U.S. military sealed off part of the Yongsan Garrison in Seoul for several hours on Thursday as it investigated a suspicious package at the post office, which turned out to be a hair grooming kit.

The package was cleared at about 1 p.m., and the post office will reopen on Friday, the garrison said.

The garrison had urged soldiers to stay in their barracks located in the area and other personnel to remain in offices. It also blocked an overpass that connects the area with another part of the sprawling base.

Traffic was allowed to resume as normal after the all-clear.

"Although this package did not

pose a threat since it was determined to be a hair grooming kit, the processes and procedures were standard to ensure the safety and security of the community," garrison spokeswoman Denver Beaulieu-Hains said.

Yongsan was the main U.S. military base in South Korea for decades after the 1950-53 Korean War. However, the population has dwindled to about 2,000 as it is in the process of closing as part of a long-delayed relocation plan.

Most service members and support staff have moved to Camp Humphreys and other hubs south of the capital.

Those remaining include military police, the garrison staff, members of the Combined Forces Command and other residual staff.

Space wing commander dies at Peterson Air Force Base

By COREY DICKSTEIN
Stars and Stripes

WASHINGTON — Air Force Col. Thomas Falzarano, who commanded the service's 21st Space Wing, was found dead Tuesday at his home on Peterson Air Force Base in Colorado, service officials said Wednesday.

The Air Force has opened an investigation into Falzarano's death but initial indications show he likely died of natural causes, officials said in a statement. Falzarano, 47, was not believed to have contracted the coronavirus, the officials said.

Falzarano took command of the 21st Space Wing for the Air Force in July 2019, and had led it for the Space Force since December. The unit is responsible for warning of incoming missiles to the top generals and admirals overseeing military operations around the world, among other space control and defense missions.

Air Force officials on Wednesday described Falzarano as a talented space officer who was expected to become a general officer, likely in the Space Force.

Space Force Gen. Jay Raymond,

the chief of space operations, said Falzarano's death was "tragic" for the Air Force and Space Force. Before taking command of the 21st Space Wing, Falzarano spent a year working as Raymond's executive officer at the former Air Force Space Command, which has since morphed into the headquarters of the Space Force.

The 21st Space Wing's vice commander, Col. Sam Johnson, who took command of the unit Tuesday, described his late boss as "a fearless leader" who will be "sorely missed."

Falzarano was a 1994 graduate of the Air Force Academy, also in Colorado Springs. After commissioning, he initially flew F-16 fighter jets before attending the service's space and missile training program, becoming its top graduate in late 1996, according to his official biography. He'd spent most of the rest of his career in the space field, which would include stints at the Pentagon and a yearlong tour in Iraq from 2007 to 2008, serving as a strategic engagement adviser to Iraqi forces in Baghdad.

dickstein.corey@stripes.com
Twitter: @CDicksteinDC



PHOTOS BY ALISON J. HUMMEL/U.S. Navy

The guided-missile destroyer USS John Paul Jones conducted live-fire training in the Pacific Ocean on Tuesday as part of an exercise designed to fully integrate units of the Nimitz Carrier Strike Group.

Destroyer USS John Paul Jones conducts live-fire drill in Pacific

By WYATT OLSON
Stars and Stripes



The Arleigh Burke class guided-missile destroyer USS John Paul Jones conducted live-fire training in the Pacific Ocean on Tuesday as part of an intensive exercise designed to fully integrate units of the Nimitz Carrier Strike Group.

The USS Nimitz departed from Naval Base Kitsap in Bremerton, Wash., on April 27.

The ongoing exercise tests "a strike group's ability as a whole to carry out sustained combat operations from the sea," according to a U.S. Navy statement.

The USS John Paul Jones, which is homeported at Joint Base Pearl Harbor-Hickam, is joined in the strike group training by guided-missile cruiser USS Princeton; guided-missile destroyers USS Sterett and USS Ralph Johnson; Destroyer Squadron 9; and Carrier Air Wing 17.

"Ships, squadrons and staff will be tested across every core warfare area within their mission sets through a variety of simulated and live events, including air warfare, strait transits, and responses to surface and subsurface contacts and electronic attacks," the Navy said.

olson.wyatt@stripes.com
Twitter: @WyattWolson

MILITARY

GAO: DOD failed to meet goal of fighting assault

By JOHN M. DONNELLY
CQ-Roll Call

WASHINGTON — Back in 2011, the Government Accountability Office urged the Pentagon to start formally monitoring how military leaders were doing in combating sexual harassment and assault, and the auditors also proposed establishing a Defense Department system for tracking progress in the overall effort.

At the time, a top Pentagon official agreed fully in writing with the auditors' recommendations and said both tasks would be done that year.

But, more than eight years later, neither job has been accomplished, GAO reported this week.

Armed Services Committee members in both chambers, when apprised of the unmet goal, said it exemplifies an inadequate Pentagon focus on a continuing scourge.

"For the DoD to come to Capitol Hill and provide sworn testimony in congressional hearings that they have zero tolerance for sexual harassment and assault, all the while knowing that they have failed to take even these common-sense steps to prevent this kind of toxic rot for nearly a decade after GAO outlined the actions, is infuriating and unacceptable," Rep. Jackie Speier, a California Democrat who chairs the Armed Services Subcommittee on Military Personnel, said in a statement to CQ Roll Call.

"Had these policies been adopted in 2011, who knows how much further we would be in the fight to eliminate not just harassment but other forms of sexual violence in our armed forces."

Sen. Jeanne Shaheen, D-N.H., who is a senior member of the Armed Services Committee, also said the Pentagon has taken too long to set up the oversight mechanisms.

"These delays are a poor reflection of the Department's commitment to root out sexual harassment, and DOD leadership must do better," Shaheen told CQ Roll Call in a statement. "I urge the Department of Defense to move expeditiously and implement these policies and oversight framework to ensure the health and safety of all service members."

The GAO compiled 81 of the auditors' top-priority recommendations for the Defense Department that have yet to be implemented.

Several recommendations concerned sexual assault and harassment.

"Our work has found weaknesses in DOD's approach to

instituting effective policies and programs on sexual harassment," the Tuesday report said. "In 2011, we found that DOD did not have assurance that individuals in positions of leadership were being held accountable for promoting, supporting, and enforcing the department's sexual harassment prevention policies and programs."

The 2011 report urged the department to develop a strategy for holding leaders accountable and, secondly, to create an oversight plan that would establish goals, means, metrics and funding levels for improving the situation.

Jo Ann Rooney, then the principal deputy Defense undersecretary for personnel and readiness, said in a Sept. 13, 2011, letter included in the report that the department concurred with both recommendations and would implement them in that fiscal year.

"Leadership accountability is essential to the success of Service and DoD efforts to prevent sexual harassment," Rooney wrote in reference to the proposal to create a way to gauge leaders' actions.

As for the oversight framework, Rooney wrote that she "recognizes the need" for the department to help guide prevention efforts.

But GAO reported this week that, as of January 2020, the Pentagon was still coordinating implementation of the recommendations.

The Pentagon had not provided a response this week to a query about the matter.

Brenda Farrell, GAO's director of defense capabilities and management, said in a statement for CQ Roll Call on Tuesday that the recommendations in question are important.

"First, for individuals in positions of leadership, support for DOD's sexual harassment policies and programs must be unequivocal — those who do not take the issue of sexual harassment seriously or who do not address incidents when they occur can undermine the department's efforts," Farrell said.

"Second," she said, "the absence of an oversight framework — including performance goals, objectives, milestones, and metrics — limits the ability of decision makers, including Congress and DOD, to assess the effectiveness of the department's policies and programs for addressing incidents of sexual harassment."

In recent years, the prevalence of unwanted sexual contact between Defense Department personnel, both military and civilian, has increasingly been the subject of public and congressional



ANDREW HARRER, GETTY IMAGES/TNS

Rep. Jackie Speier, D-Calif., seen here in November, and other members of the Armed Services Committee urge the DOD to move forward on policies it promised to complete to monitor how military leaders are combating sexual harassment and assault.

attention.

Lawmakers in both parties have tried to stem sexual offenses within the military for more than a decade, inserting dozens of provisions into the annual Pentagon policy bill aimed at changing military culture and the handling of these crimes.

Military leaders have spoken out more and more about the importance of tackling the problem. To deal with it, the Defense Department has launched a bevy of surveys and reports and has created new organizations and over-

sight mechanisms.

Still, the progress is mixed at best, experts said.

An October 2019 report on the Pentagon's top management challenges from the department's inspector general office included sexual offenses on the list and noted that a substantial portion of them are not prosecuted fully. The report also noted that a climate that condones sexual offenses is likely to be plagued by other problems. And it said people who are victims of sexual crimes often suffer from post-traumatic stress

disorder for years afterward.

The number of reported sexual assault and harassment cases in the military rose in each of the last three years for which data is available — from 6,172 in fiscal 2016 to 7,825 in fiscal 2019, the report said.

"For too long, sexual harassment in the military has been a systemic problem," Shaheen said. And the GAO's Farrell said the Defense Department "has not demonstrated the commitment necessary to effectively address" the problem.

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VIRUS OUTBREAK

More civilians lose access to Japan base

By JAMES BOLINGER
Stars and Stripes

Several civilians working at Sasebo Naval Base in southwestern Japan have lost their base access and are facing disciplinary hearings for violating a coronavirus public health order, installation commander Capt. Brad Stallings announced this week.

"We are still struggling getting 100% of the community onboard with following the Public Health Order and taking the Public Health Emergency serious," he said in a message posted to Facebook on Monday.

Stallings said "some folks" violated the order "this weekend and have now lost their base access." Further, they face a

"Civilian Administrative Forum" and additional sanctions, he said. Further details were not released.

U.S. civilians, such as family members, Defense Department employees and contractors, who fall under the status of forces agreement go before a forum for a case review before their privileges and access are curtailed on a long-term basis, base spokesman Aki Nichols told Stars and Stripes by text message Wednesday.

A forum is an informal process where a magistrate speaks with the individual, who may present a defense or evidence of extenuating circumstances, he said.

Several civilians previously violated Sasebo's public health order, which re-

stricts military members to the installation except for emergencies and prohibits civilian personnel from visiting bars and restaurants off base. Security personnel found two civilians in an off-base bar on April 10.

Violators are immediately restricted in their movements to prevent the possible spread of the coronavirus, Nichols said.

In most cases, a temporary restriction and a warning is sufficient punishment, Nichols said. However, in cases where more serious administrative action is considered, such as being barred from the base, the civilian is entitled to a hearing by a forum.

Forum magistrates look for patterns of

misconduct, repeat offences, severity of violation and the likelihood that the individual will continue committing misconduct, he said.

Base debarment is a last result and only comes when evidence suggests the offender will persist as a threat to the health and safety of the base, he said.

"It is so unfortunate that a few endanger us all," Stallings said on Facebook. "Thank you to the thousands who are doing it right every day. Also, thank you to the ones who are getting involved and politely correcting folks when you see something wrong."

bolinger.james@stripes.com
Twitter: @bolinger2004

Troops in Pacific dream of post-lockdown freedom

By SETH ROBSON
Stars and Stripes

YOKOTA AIR BASE, Japan — Beaches, bars and amusement parks beckon for troops, civilians and their families eager to be set free from coronavirus lockdowns in the Far East.

To help slow the virus' spread, commanders have restricted the movement and activities of U.S. personnel since late March in South Korea and early April in Japan. The commander of U.S. Forces Japan on Tuesday extended a public health emergency imposed on U.S. troops after personnel in the country through June 14.

But with case numbers dropping and attractions reopening off base in both nations, service members can dare to dream of the freedom they enjoyed before the pandemic.

Disneyland and island hopping

Tokyo, the epicenter of the pandemic in Japan, reported only 10 new coronavirus cases Wednesday. The national government has decided to allow the reopening of parks, museums, libraries and other public facilities and to ease social distancing requirements. Japan reported 80 new infections nationwide Wednesday, bringing the total to 16,024 cases and 668 deaths, according to the Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare.

Tokyo Disneyland, which has been shuttered since Feb. 29, will be the first stop for Airman 1st Class Taylor Andrew, 32, a cyber transport systems technician at Yokota in western Tokyo, once restrictions — in place until June 30 at Yokota — are lifted and the resort reopens.

"I've been to Disneyland and Disney World in the U.S. and I want to see the Japanese version," he said Wednesday.

On the island of Okinawa, which hasn't reported a new case since April 30, some businesses were cleared to reopen Thursday; however, the approximately 27,000 service members stationed on the island must still abide by USFJ restrictions.

Marine Sgt. Slader Zeller, an instructor at the Jungle Warfare Training Center on Okinawa, is eager to get some ink once he's allowed to visit local tattoo shops.

"We got that stimulus check and that's an extra \$1,200 to get a nice tattoo with that money," he said Tuesday at Camp Foster. "That or just be able to go out, socialize, go to the bars, have a good time. People get cooped up; they want to be able to relax after work, kind of unwind, and, you know; you can't really do that if you have to go home every single day as soon as you get off work."



AKIFUMI ISHIIKAWA/Stars and Stripes

A jogger passes the shuttered entrance to Tokyo Disneyland in Urayasu, Japan, on Tuesday.

Navy spouse and mother of two small children, ages 5 and 3, Sam Evans, also at Camp Foster, said she hates being trapped at home.

"I would love to take them to the playground again and go to local restaurants," she said Tuesday. "We miss the food so much. Just go out and do fun stuff again because we hate being at home."

Air Force Capt. Gregory Justis, 37, of Michigan, who works at Kadena Air Base, Okinawa, is planning a trip to the nearby Kerama Islands when the restrictions ease.

"It has the most incredible beaches and underwater life I've ever seen. And it's only a short hop away," he said Tuesday. "I can't wait to get back to my favorite restaurant on the island, a local noodle joint that doesn't do drive-thru."

The sand and sea are also calling Marine Pfc. Arturo Sierra, 19, of Tennessee, who is also stationed on Okinawa.

"I'm going straight to the beach," he said of his post-lockdown plans.

Sierra hasn't seen much of the southern Japanese island since he got there a month ago, just as the restrictions were ramping

up for service members.

"There's a lot of stuff to explore so I'm keeping an eye out," he said, in between administering temperature checks for patrons outside the Camp Foster commissary Tuesday.

Nightlife and travel

South Korea reported 26 new infections as of Wednesday morning, according to the Chosun Ilbo newspaper. The country was thought to have contained the coronavirus after going days without a new case earlier this month despite no national lockdown. However, Seoul's mayor ordered bars and nightclubs to close after dozens of infections linked to establishments in the capital last week, the Wall Street Journal reported Sunday.

Once he's able, travel is also on the cards for 1st Lt. Tarin Cavazos, who works at the 51st Logistics Readiness Squadron at Osan Air Base, South Korea.

Cavazos and his wife, Dana, aren't interested in going to places near the gate, he said Tuesday.

"We had a cruise scheduled and that got

canceled obviously," he said. "We would love to see the Great Wall of China, Vietnam, Thailand."

Army Sgt. Zak McCartney, 27, of Osan's 35th Air Defense Artillery Brigade, said Wednesday he misses taking his wife out to restaurants and bars. They were supposed to go on vacation this month to Bali, Indonesia.

"Once this whole travel restriction is up, that's like one of the first things that I have on my mind," he said.

Back in Japan, Aviation Boatswain's Mate Aircraft Handler Dennis Gentry said Wednesday he wasn't sure where he'll go once restrictions are lifted at Yokosuka Naval Base. The installation has been on a strict lockdown since March 27.

"I can almost guarantee most sailors will be going to the Honch," he said, referring to a popular bar district outside the main gate.

Staff reporters Matthew M. Burke and Aya Ichihashi at Camp Foster, Okinawa; Christian Lopez at Yokosuka Naval Base, Japan; and Matthew Keeler at Osan Air Base, South Korea, contributed to this report.
robson.seth@stripes.com
Twitter: @sethrobson

VIRUS OUTBREAK

Unusual itinerary

Air Force crew from Ramstein leapfrogs around Italy flying medical supplies

By JENNIFER H. SVAN
Stars and Stripes

RAMSTEIN AIR BASE, Germany — The itinerary was a first for a C-130 cargo plane crew from Ramstein: fly to Milan, continue to Rome, back to Milan, then back home to Germany, all in the same day.

The large Italian civilian airports, now desolate and eerily quiet due to the coronavirus pandemic, aren't typical destinations for the 37th Airlift Squadron at Ramstein. But the route will soon be familiar, as the squadron begins a mission to help Italy through the crisis.

Wednesday's flight around Italy was the first of a planned series organized by U.S. Air Forces in Europe to distribute thousands of pounds of medical supplies to hospitals across the country, officials said.

The effort is part of a \$100 million relief plan for Italy announced last month by the White House, USAF officials said. It calls for the Pentagon to transport medical equipment and other humanitarian aid in coordination with the State Department and the Italian government.

NATO's Rapid Air Mobility initiative, activated in March for coronavirus relief efforts, also contributed to Wednesday's mission.

Two similar flights from Ramstein to Italy are planned in the coming week, officials said. They will likely continue as long as Italy needs them.

On Wednesday, the C-130J Super Hercules landed at Milan with an empty cargo hold at a near-empty airport.

Milan is close to the epicenter of Italy's coronavirus outbreak in Lombardy. The normally busy Milan Malpensa Airport looked like an aircraft boneyard, with fleets of idle passenger jets parked everywhere.

"It's a ghost town," said Maj. Thomas Morgan, who piloted the flight with 1st Lt. Kane McManus. When the C-130 landed, it was one of only two aircraft taxiing at the sprawling international airport.

The crew picked up six pallets of KN95 masks, surgical gowns and COVID-19 test kits destined for hospitals in Italy's south, greeting their Italian counterparts with waves or elbow bumps instead of handshakes.

The plane flew on to Rome, where it picked up a smaller shipment of N95 masks and others with protective face shields, destined for hospitals in the north, which meant a return to Milan.

"It feels great ... to be able to be part of something bigger than ourselves and help out an ally, especially one as old as Italy," Morgan said.

With fewer opportunities to fly during the pandemic, McManus said they were eager to "get this one ... and be able to help out when we can."

svan.jennifer@stripes.com
Twitter: @stripesktown



PHOTOS BY JENNIFER H. SVAN/Stars and Stripes

Senior Airman David Tan, 86th Operations Support Squadron aircraft loadmaster, watches as an Italian cargo loader places a pallet for loading into a C-130J Super Hercules in Milan, Italy, on Wednesday.



Above: A cargo label can be seen on medical supplies to be distributed by the U.S. Air Force. Left: Maj. Thomas Morgan, a 37th Airlift Squadron pilot at Ramstein Air Base, Germany, talks to Italian air force personnel about supplies.

Flyover planned to salute Hawaii's health care workers

By WYATT OLSON
Stars and Stripes

FORT SHAFTER, Hawaii — Air Force and Air National Guard aircraft were to conduct a flyover of Hawaii's major hospitals Thursday in a salute to frontline health care workers coping with the coronavirus.

Aircraft from the Hawaii Air National Guard and Air Force at Joint Base Pearl Harbor-Hickam were to fly above most of the state's large hospitals and major metro areas beginning around 11:30 a.m., the Air Force said in a news release Wednesday.

A C-17 Globemaster III, KC-135 Stratotanker and F-22 Raptor

fighter jets were to fly at an altitude of about 3,000 feet.

The planes were scheduled to first fly as a group over seven hospitals on the island of Oahu, after which the F-22s would head off to regularly scheduled training. The C-17 would fly on alone to Kauai, while the KC-135 would head east toward Molokai, Lanai, Hawaii island and Maui.

Flyovers have become commonplace across the U.S. mainland in the era of COVID-19, the disease caused by the coronavirus.

The Navy's Blue Angels and Air Force's Thunderbirds demonstrations squadrons have flown over numerous cities on the main-

land in recent weeks as a gesture to medical personnel, emergency responders and others dealing daily with the pandemic.

Some have criticized the flyovers as taxpayer funds ill-spent at a time of 15% unemployment and burgeoning federal deficits in the wake of emergency funding for workers, businesses and hospitals.

The Air Force stressed in its news release Wednesday that the aircraft flying over Hawaii were conducting routine training flights.

"These aircraft were already scheduled for these training flights, so the flyover is at no ad-

ditional cost to the taxpayer," the Air Force said.

The flight path was set in coordination with officials with the Federal Aviation Administration and Hawaii, the Air Force said.

"This event will recognize the hard work that everyone in Hawaii has already accomplished to keep Hawaii's [coronavirus] cases among the lowest in the United States, while also acknowledging the need for continued vigilance, and our obligation to those in our community who will require continued assistance," said Brig. Gen. Dann S. Carlson, commander of the Hawaii Air National Guard's

154th Wing. "These flyovers are meant to provide hope and reaffirm confidence in our state and nation while emphasizing the Air Force's enduring commitment and support to the people of the State of Hawaii."

Hawaii has had 638 coronavirus cases and 17 deaths as of Wednesday, according to the Hawaii Department of Health.

The Air Force advised people to watch the flyovers from their homes, refraining from travel, in order to adhere to social distancing guidelines in place by order of the governor.

olson.wyatt@stripes.com
Twitter: @WyattWOlson

VIRUS OUTBREAK

As pandemic rolls on, GOP hits pause on new aid

Associated Press

WASHINGTON — Businesses are going belly up, tens of millions have been laid off and, by some measures, the U.S. seems headed for another Great Depression. But Republicans surveying the wreckage aren't ready for another round of coronavirus aid, instead urging a "pause."

It's a position based on a confluence of factors. Polls have showed that GOP voters think the government is already doing enough. Republicans on Capitol Hill are divided over the best approach. Billions approved by Congress have yet to be spent. And it's also unclear what President Donald Trump wants to do next, if anything, to juice the economy — his payroll tax cut idea hasn't gained any traction on Capitol Hill.

For these and other reasons, GOP leaders see an unfolding crisis that does not yet cry out for further action.

"There's just a pragmatic piece to this, which is, if we're going to do another bill, let's get into June and July so we know how people are reemerging," said Rep. Patrick McHenry, R-N.C., who gave up his leadership post last year to take the top GOP job on the Financial Services Committee.

The political balancing act comes as the long-dormant falcon-wing of the GOP lumbers back to life, recoiling from the House Democratic proposal to spend another \$3 trillion in taxpayer money. Yet many Republicans have conceded that there is risk in standing pat at a time of massive unemployment,

financial struggles for local governments and growing COVID-19 caseloads, particularly with the November election fast approaching.

Despite their distaste for further negotiations with Democrats, many Republicans privately see passage of another coronavirus measure as inevitable.

Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell, a proponent of the pause, said Tuesday that Republicans are "taking a look at what we've already done. And we've added about \$3 trillion to the national debt, and assessing the effectiveness of that before deciding to go forward."

Yet McConnell also cracked open the door, cautiously, to more legislation, provided that it is "narrowly targeted."

"I'm in discussion, we all are, with the administration. If we reach a decision along with the administration to move to another phase, that'll be the time to interact with the Democrats," he said.

"We're starting to hear grumbling about spending that I haven't heard for a while," said Adam Brandon, president of FreedomWorks, a conservative group that has helped promote demonstrations around the country demanding a relaxation of state lockdown orders.

"We're starting to hear grumbling about spending that I haven't heard for a while," said Adam Brandon, president of FreedomWorks, a conservative group that has helped promote demonstrations around the country demanding a relaxation of state lockdown orders.



Jeff Chu/AP

A man wears a face mask while walking past a handwritten sign advising that nothing of value is inside a boarded up Union Nails salon during the coronavirus outbreak in San Francisco on Tuesday.

Jobless: Unemployment numbers continue to plummet amid hitting more historic lows

FROM FRONT PAGE

A handful of states have gone further, including Georgia, which has opened barber shops, bowling alleys, tattoo parlors and gyms. South Carolina has reopened beach hotels, and Texas has reopened shopping malls.

Data from private firms suggested that some previously laid-off workers have started to return to small businesses in those states, although the number of applications for unemployment benefits remains high.

The latest jobless claims follow a devastating jobs report last week. The government said that the unemployment rate soared to 14.7% in April, the highest rate since the Great Depression, and employers shed a stunning 20.5 million jobs. A decade's worth of job growth was wiped out in a month.

Even those figures failed to cap-

ture the full scale of the damage. The government said that many workers in April were counted as employed but absent from work, but should have been counted as temporarily unemployed.

Millions of other laid-off workers didn't look for a new job in April, likely discouraged by their prospects in a mostly shuttered economy, and weren't included either. If all those people had been counted as unemployed, the jobless rate would have reached nearly 24%.

Most economists have forecast that the official unemployment rate could hit 18% or higher in May before potentially declining by summer.

The job market's collapse has occurred with dizzying speed. As recently as February, the unemployment rate was 3.5%, a half-century low. Employers had added jobs for a record 9½ years. Even in March, unemployment

was just 4.4%.

Now, with few Americans shopping, traveling, eating out or otherwise spending normally, economists are projecting that the gross domestic product — the broadest gauge of economic activity — is shrinking in the April-June quarter at a roughly 40% annual rate. That would be the deepest quarterly contraction on record.

Few analysts expect a quick rebound. Federal Reserve Chair Jerome Powell warned Wednesday that the virus-induced recession could turn into a prolonged downturn that would erode workers' skills and employment connections while bankrupting many small businesses.

Powell urged Congress and the White House to consider additional spending and tax measures to help small businesses and households avoid bankruptcy.

US immunologist warns of 'darkest winter' if virus rebounds

BY RICARDO ALONSO-ZALDIVAR
Associated Press

WASHINGTON — America faces the "darkest winter in modern history" unless leaders act decisively to prevent a rebound of the coronavirus, said a government whistleblower who alleged that he was ousted from his job after warning the Trump administration to prepare for the pandemic.

Immunologist Dr. Rick Bright made his sobering prediction in testimony prepared for his appearance Thursday before the House Energy and Commerce Committee. Aspects of his complaint about early administration handling of the crisis are expected to be backed up by testimony from an executive of a company that manufactures respirator masks.

His federal watchdog agency has found "reasonable grounds" that

Bright was removed from his post as head of the Biomedical Advanced Research and Development Authority after sounding the alarm at the Department of Health and Human Services. Bright alleged that he became a target of criticism when he urged early efforts to invest in vaccine development and stock up on supplies.

"Our window of opportunity is closing," Bright says in his pre-pandemic testimony posted on the House committee website. "If we fail to develop a national coordinated response, based in science, I fear the pandemic will get far worse and be prolonged, causing unprecedented illness and fatalities."

Bright's testimony follows this week's warning by Dr. Anthony Fauci, the government's top infectious disease expert, that a rushed lifting of store-closing and stay-

at-home restrictions could "turn back the clock," seeding more suffering and death, and complicating efforts to get the economy rolling again.

President Donald Trump on Thursday dismissed Bright in a tweet as "a disgruntled employee, not liked or respected by people I spoke to and who, with his attitude, should no longer be working for our government." It's a sentiment some of the president's political allies have expressed about Fauci as well.

In his prepared testimony, Bright said, "The undeniable fact is there will be a resurgence of (COVID-19) this fall, greatly compounding the challenges of seasonal influenza and putting an unprecedented strain on our health care system."

"Without clear planning and implementation of the steps that I and other experts have outlined,

2020 will be darkest winter in modern history," Bright wrote.

Bright, who has a doctoral degree in immunology, outlined a path forward that would be based on science, even as researchers work to develop better treatments and an effective vaccine. The steps include:

- Establishing a national testing strategy. The White House has urged states to take the lead on testing, even as the federal government pushes to make more tests and better ones widely available. Trump said that the U.S. has "prevailed" on testing through this strategy, but in Congress, Democrats are demanding a federal framework to encompass the whole nation.

- Doubling down on educating the public about basic safety measures like frequent hand-washing and wearing masks in public places as guidelines indicate.

"Frankly, our leaders must lead by modeling the behavior," said Bright, in a not-too-subtle reference to a president who conspicuously goes maskless.

- Ramping up production of essential equipment and supplies, from cotton swabs for testing to protective gear for health care workers and essential workers.

- Setting up a system to fairly distribute equipment and supplies that are scarce and highly sought. Eliminating state vs. state competition would increase efficiency and reduce costs, he wrote.

As part of his whistleblower complaint, Bright is seeking to be reinstated in his old job. HHS, his employer, said that it strongly disagrees with his allegations and that it reassigned him to a high-profile position helping to lead the development of new coronavirus tests at the National Institutes of Health.

VIRUS OUTBREAK



MICHAEL DWYER/AP

Members of the boogaloo movement, attend a demonstration against the lockdown over concern about COVID-19 at the State House in Concord, N.H., on April 18.

Restrictions fuel anti-government 'boogaloo' movement across US

By MICHAEL KUNZELMAN
Associated Press

SILVER SPRING, Md. — They carry high-powered rifles and wear tactical gear, but their Hawaiian shirts and leis are what stand out in the crowds that have formed at state capital buildings to protest COVID-19 lockdown orders. The signature look for the "boogaloo" anti-government movement is designed to get attention.

The loose movement, which uses an '80s movie sequel as a code word for a second civil war, is among the extremists using the armed protests against stay-at-home orders as a platform. Like other movements that once largely inhabited corners of the internet, it has seized on the social unrest and economic calamity caused by the pandemic to publicize its violent messages.

In April, armed demonstrators passed out "Liberty or Boogaloo" fliers at a statehouse protest in Concord, N.H. A leader of the Three Percenters militia move-

ment who organized a rally in Olympia, Wash., last month encouraged rally participants to wear Hawaiian shirts, according to the Anti-Defamation League.

Another anti-lockdown rally was planned for Thursday at the state Capitol in Lansing, Mich., site of an angry protest last month that included armed members of the Michigan Liberty Militia. Michigan Gov. Gretchen Whitmer, a Democrat, has been the target of violent threats on Facebook forums, including a private one called "The Rhett E. Boogie Group."

One user said Whitmer should be "guillotined" after another suggested another governor should be hanged from a noose, according to a screenshot by Project Research Initiative.

The coronavirus pandemic has become a catalyst for the "boogaloo" movement because the stay-at-home orders have "put a stressor on a lot of very unhappy people," said J.J. MacNab, a fellow at George Washington Uni-

versity's Program on Extremism. MacNab said their rhetoric goes beyond discussions about fighting virus restrictions — which many protesters brand as "tyranny" — to talking about killing FBI agents or police officers "to get the war going."

"They are far more graphic and far more specific in their threats than I've seen in a long time," she said.

An April 22 report by the Tech Transparency Project, which tracks technology companies, found 125 Facebook "boogaloo"-related groups that had attracted tens of thousands of members in the previous 30 days. The project pointed to coronavirus crisis as a driving factor.

"Some boogaloo supporters see the public health lockdowns and other directives by states and cities across the country as a violation of their rights, and they're aiming to harness public frustration at such measures to rally and attract new followers to their cause," the project's report says.

Wis. court rules against order to stay at home

By TODD RICHMOND
Associated Press

MADISON, Wis. — The Wisconsin Supreme Court struck down Gov. Tony Evers' coronavirus stay-at-home order Wednesday, ruling that his administration overstepped its authority when it extended it for another month without consulting legislators.

The 4-3 ruling essentially reopens the state, lifting caps on the size of gatherings, allowing people to travel as they please and allowing shuttered businesses to reopen, including bars and restaurants. The Tavern League of Wisconsin swiftly posted the news on its website, telling members, "You can OPEN IMMEDIATELY!"

The decision let stand language that had closed schools, however, and local governments can still impose their own health restrictions. In Dane County, home to the capital of Madison, officials quickly imposed a mandate incorporating most of the state order. County health officials in Milwaukee said a stay-at-home order they enacted in late March remains in effect.

Evers reacted angrily in a conference call Wednesday night, saying the state has been doing well in the fight against the coronavirus. He predicted the court ruling will lead more counties to adopt their own restrictions, leading to a confusing patchwork of ordinances that will allow infection to spread.

"Today, Republican legislators convinced four members of the state Supreme Court to throw the state into chaos," Evers said. "They have provided no plan. There's no question among anybody that people are going to get sick. Republicans own that

chaos."

Chief Justice Patience Roggensack wrote for the majority that health secretary Andrea Palm's order amounted to an emergency rule that she doesn't have the power to create on her own.

"Rule-making exists precisely to ensure that kind of controlling, subjective judgment asserted by



Evers

one unelected official, Palm, is not imposed in Wisconsin," Roggensack, part of the court's 5-2 conservative majority, wrote.

Rebecca Dallet, one of the court's liberal justices, dissented, saying the decision will "undoubtedly go down as one of the most blatant examples of judicial activism in this court's history. And it will be Wisconsin's who pay the price."

State Assembly Speaker Robin Vos and Senate Majority Leader Scott Fitzgerald, both Republicans, said they're confident businesses can safely reopen by following guidelines calling for letting workers stay home if they're sick, making workers wash their hands and implementing telework and social distancing and postponing travel and events.

"This (court decision) does not promote people to act in a way that they believe endangers their health," they said.

Evers first issued a stay-at-home order in March that closed schools and nonessential businesses. The order was supposed to lift April 24, but Palm, an Evers appointee, extended it to May 26.

Trump's push for opening school clashes with Fauci's caution

By KEVIN FREKING
AND JILL COLVIN
Associated Press

WASHINGTON — President Donald Trump called on governors across the nation to work to reopen schools that were closed because of the coronavirus, pointedly taking issue with Dr. Anthony Fauci's caution against moving too quickly in sending students back to class.

The president accused Fauci of wanting "to play all sides of the equation," a comment that suggested he is tiring of the nation's top infectious disease expert.

"I think they should open the schools, absolutely. I think they should," Trump told reporters at the White House, echoing comments he had made in a television interview. "Our country's got to get back and it's got to get back as soon as possible. And I don't consider our country coming back if the schools are closed."

Fauci had urged caution in testimony before a Senate committee Tuesday, although he made clear that he believes reopening decisions will likely differ from one region to the next.

"We don't know everything

about this virus and we really better be pretty careful, particularly when it comes to children," Fauci told the committee. At one point, he told members that "the idea of having treatments available or a vaccine to facilitate the re-entry of students into the fall term would be something that would be a bit of a bridge too far."

Fauci later clarified that he was not implying students should be barred from returning to class until a COVID-19 vaccine is developed. But his comments were nonetheless seized on by conservative commentators, as well as

Sen. Rand Paul, R-Ky., who called the notion "kind of ridiculous."

"To me, it's not an acceptable answer," Trump said of Fauci on Wednesday. He said the coronavirus has "had very little impact on young people," although there is growing concern over cases of a mysterious inflammatory syndrome in young people that is thought to be related to the virus.

Speaking of Fauci, Trump told Maria Bartiromo in an interview for Fox Business Network's "Mornings with Maria" that "I totally disagree with him on schools."

In his testimony, Fauci issued a blunt warning that cities and states could "turn back the clock" and see more death and economic damage if they lift stay-at-home orders too quickly — a message that stands in sharp contrast to Trump's push to reopen the nation as he tries to blunt the economic damage caused by the pandemic during an election year.

"There is a real risk that you will trigger an outbreak that you may not be able to control," Fauci warned as more than two dozen states have begun to lift their lockdowns.

VIRUS OUTBREAK ROUNDUP

Some Pa. counties resist after funding threat from governor

Associated Press

HARRISBURG, Pa. — Two days after Gov. Tom Wolf lambasted them as “cowardly” and vowed to withhold funding, several Pennsylvania counties signaled Wednesday that they are moving ahead with plans to defy him by lifting some of their pandemic restrictions. Others, however, backed down under the governor’s threat.

Commissioners in many GOP-controlled counties where the Democratic governor has yet to ease any restrictions have said that they can manage the public health impacts of the coronavirus and reopen safely. They said that the shutdown threatens to destroy local economies — especially small businesses — the longer it goes.

Beaver County, home to a severe nursing home outbreak, said that it plans to operate as if Wolf had already eased restrictions there, meaning that residents can freely leave their homes and retailers, offices and other kinds of businesses can reopen. Because of the outbreak, Beaver is the lone western Pennsylvania county that remains locked down.

Georgia

ATLANTA — Georgia’s governor said that he continues to see positive signs in the state’s battle against the coronavirus, even as the state’s death toll from the virus surpassed 1,500 and some health officials expressed concerns about the state’s aggressive plans to restart the economy.

Gov. Brian Kemp said Wednesday that Georgia has the lowest number of COVID-19 patients in hospitals — 1,094 — since April 8. Kemp said that the number of patients on ventilators has also dropped to 873.

Kemp eased some restrictions this week on businesses and child care operations, but said that he was keeping most current rules until at least the end of May.

The Republican governor reiterated that he believes Georgia is containing the COVID-19 respiratory illness, despite areas of concern.

Hawaii

HONOLULU — Some Hawaii hotels said that they need more guidance about how to enforce a 14-day quarantine on travelers, including what to do if guests refuse to comply or how to participate if they still use physical keys instead of cards.

The Hawaii Tourism and Lodging Association recently asked hotels to give out room keycards that are only good for checking in, so that if a guest leaves the room, they need a new one to re-enter

— signaling to hotel staff that a guest defied the quarantine.

Gov. David Ige mandated the traveler quarantine starting on March 26 in an attempt to curb the spread of the coronavirus. As of Wednesday, the state reported 638 coronavirus cases and 17 deaths.

Some visitors who allegedly violated the quarantine have been arrested.

Idaho

WEISER — A cluster of COVID-19 cases has been confirmed in Washington County, leading to the voluntary shutdown of a food processing plant, Idaho health officials said Wednesday.

Southwest District Health said that some people infected with the coronavirus work at Fry Foods Inc. in Weiser.

Company Human Resources Manager Douglas Arnold Wold said that eight workers are infected, and all of them had attended a family gathering of at least 30 people last weekend in Weiser or are related to someone who attended. Wold said that some people from Utah also took part.

Health officials were working to contact people who have been in close proximity to those who became infected.

Louisiana

BATON ROUGE — On Monday, Gov. John Bel Edwards’ administration will start releasing the names of nursing homes where residents have tested positive for the coronavirus and where there have been deaths from COVID-19.

The administration initially released that information early in the outbreak, but later stopped providing details, offering only the numbers of nursing home residents statewide who have tested positive and who have died.

That raised questions about whether family members of nursing home residents who aren’t infected were told what was happening in the facility.

Dr. Alex Billioux, leader of Louisiana’s public health office, said the only applications considered would be from businesses that did not initially receive aid from the federal Paycheck Protection Program.

Maryland

ANNAPOLIS — Maryland residents will no longer be required to stay at home, but will be strongly advised to continue doing so, especially if they are older and more vulnerable to the



MARK LENIHAN/AP

Seth Goldberg has food delivered to his car by a waiter with the Bel Aire Diner on Wednesday in Queens, N.Y. The diner is using its parking lot to host 35 cars for a pop-up drive-in movie theater. The movie shown twice Wednesday was “Dirty Dancing.”

coronavirus, Gov. Larry Hogan said Wednesday as he announced the first stage of a state recovery plan and the reopening of retail stores with limits.

The Republican governor said that the state is gradually moving into stage one of the state’s recovery plan at 5 p.m. Friday, after 14 days of plateauing of key hospital metrics. He also said that the decision came after consultation with a state team of public health experts and business leaders.

Retail stores may reopen at up to 50% capacity, with curbside pickup and delivery strongly encouraged and all public health precautions in place. Examples of businesses that may reopen include clothing and shoe stores, pet groomers, animal adoption shelters, car washes, art galleries and bookstores. All manufacturing may resume operations, with multiple shifts encouraged.

Mississippi

JACKSON — Mississippi legislators voted late Wednesday to create grant programs for small businesses hurt by the coronavirus pandemic, using some of the \$1.25 billion in relief money that the federal government is sending the state. The total pricetag for the grants would be \$300 million.

If Republican Gov. Tate Reeves signs the proposal into law, a \$60 million program would provide \$2,000 grants for businesses that were forced to close by government orders and for child care centers.

The other \$240 million would be for grants ranging from \$1,500 to \$25,000. For the first 21 days, the only applications considered would be from businesses that did not initially receive aid from the federal Paycheck Protection Program.

The programs would be for businesses that existed before March 1 and have 50 or fewer employees. Businesses that work in partisan politics or in lobbying are not eligible to apply.

North Carolina

RALEIGH — A judge on Wednesday rejected requests of several offenders and civil rights groups exhorting him to tell North Carolina corrections leaders to reduce the prison population further to protect inmates from COVID-19.

The denials from Superior Court Judge Vince Rozier came after he received an extensive report he demanded last week from prison officials on what wardens are doing to discourage the virus’ spread in the more than 50 prisons. The plaintiffs who are serving time behind bars have said in affidavits that they were worried for their health if they remained in prison.

Lawyers for the state argued in court documents that Gov. Roy Cooper’s administration was best equipped to protect the health and safety of prisoners and had responded vigorously. The prison system has sent home several hundred more offenders that were otherwise imprisoned, blocked visitations and stopped taking in offenders from county jails.

More than 640 offenders in about a dozen prisons have tested positive for the coronavirus, and five of them have died. The Department of Public Safety said this week that more than 500 of them are now deemed to have recovered, based on government health guidelines, and are no longer in medical isolation.

South Dakota

SIOUX FALLS — The head of a Native American tribe said Wednesday that it won’t comply with South Dakota Gov. Kristi Noem’s demand to remove coronavirus checkpoints it set up on federal and state highways that run through its reservation.

Harold Frazier, the chairman of the Cheyenne River Sioux Tribe, told Noem in a short letter that the tribe would consider her request to restrict checkpoints on tribal roads. But he made it clear

to The Associated Press that he believes the tribe’s sovereignty allows it to operate checkpoints anywhere on the Cheyenne River Indian Reservation, which is in northern South Dakota. The checkpoints are essential to protecting the health of the people on the reservation, he said.

The Republican governor demanded that the Cheyenne River Sioux Tribe and the Oglala Sioux Tribe remove the checkpoints from federal and state highways, calling them illegal. The tribes began monitoring their borders last month in an effort to stop unnecessary visitors who could be carrying the coronavirus.

Noem on Friday threatened to sue the tribes if they didn’t disassemble the road checks. But this week, she tried a different tack, offering to meet if they would consider limiting the checkpoints only to tribal roads.

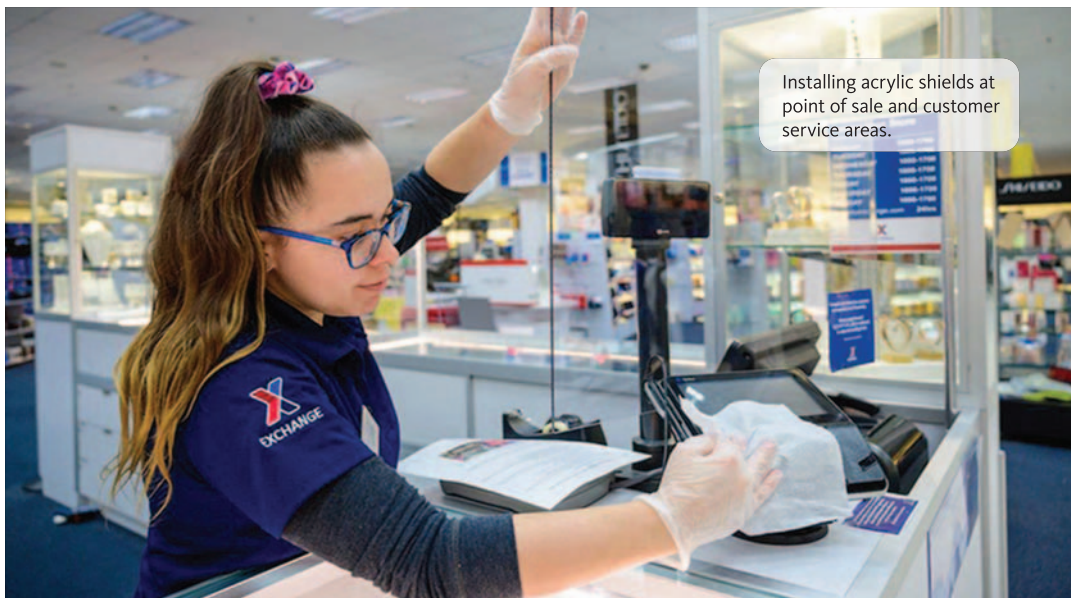
Texas

HOUSTON — The hundreds of contact tracers being trained in Texas’ most populous county will help it manage any flare-ups of the coronavirus, but it doesn’t mean that things are back to normal, and residents should still be doing their part to help stop the virus’ spread, officials said Wednesday.

A key part of Texas’ plan as it continues to reopen its economy has been building a team of 4,000 contact tracers, investigators who contact people who test positive for COVID-19, track down their contacts and get them into quarantine before they can spread the virus.

Harris County, which has more than 4.7 million residents, was expected to train 200 new contact tracers by Friday and another 100 by May 22.

Harris County Judge Lina Hidalgo on Wednesday, however, warned residents that the small army of contact tracers being trained locally doesn’t mean residents should let their guard down.



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NATION

Ex-Navy pilot wins Calif. House seat

Associated Press

LOS ANGELES — Mike Garcia grew up a single-minded kid from Southern California: He just wanted to fly fighter jets. His decision to enter national politics wouldn't come until decades later, after he had seen one California election too many.

A career as a Navy aviator would lead to a decade in the defense industry. But it was the 2018 elections that prompted Garcia to enter public life, as his home state moved deeper into Democratic-dominated government that he faulted for job-crushing regulation and climbing taxes.

"I don't want my country to turn into what my state has become," says Garcia, who claimed a vacant U.S. House seat Tuesday north of Los Angeles.

The political newcomer's win over Democrat Christy Smith marked the first time in over two decades that a Republican captured a Democratic-held congressional district in California.

What was supposed to be a tossup election ended up with Garcia holding a comfortable 12-point edge in an incomplete tally Wednesday.

Garcia appeared to benefit

from enthusiasm among conservatives who saw a rare opportunity to seize a Democratic-held seat in California, while the electorate that turned out in the unusual special election skewed toward reliable, older Republican voters, even though the district has a Democratic registration edge.

His Hispanic surname was likely a benefit in a district with a significant Latino population. His military service would play well in a district popular with veterans and Los Angeles police officers.

The son of a Mexican immigrant father, Garcia will go to Congress as a fresh face who campaigned as a supporter of President Donald Trump and railed against "socialist-style" policies coming from the Sacramento statehouse.

Smith delivered her congratulations, but said that she expected their roles to be reversed in November when the two meet in a rematch for the full House term that begins in January.

The race in the 25th District was being watched nationally as a proxy vote on Trump's leadership during the coronavirus crisis, as well as for hints about the political climate heading toward the November elections.



Mike Garcia

Garcia, 44, a father of two boys whose wife is an interior designer, grew up in the same area he will represent, a district that cuts through suburbs and small ranches in northern Los Angeles and eastern Ventura counties.

"I didn't grow up wanting to be a politician," he told supporters at a Simi Valley tavern in January, before statewide stay-at-home orders took effect. "I literally just saw the last elections and I said, 'Hey, if I'm not going to do it, who is going to do it?'"

A top graduate at the Naval Academy, he went on to fly over 30 combat missions in Operation Iraqi Freedom. After his time in the military, he worked for defense contractor Raytheon.

The seat became vacant last year after then Rep. Katie Hill acknowledged an affair with a campaign worker and the House opened an ethics probe into an allegation that she was involved with a member of her congressional staff, which Hill denied.

Ex-judge asked to see if Flynn should be held in contempt

By MICHAEL BALSAMO

Associated Press

WASHINGTON — The judge presiding over Michael Flynn's criminal case appointed a retired jurist on Wednesday to evaluate whether the former Trump administration national security adviser should be held in criminal contempt.

The judge's order is the second signal in as many days registering his resistance to swiftly accepting the Justice Department's motion to dismiss all charges against Flynn.

In his order, U.S. District Judge Emmet Sullivan appointed former federal judge John Gleeson as an amicus curiae — or friend-of-the-court — and asked him to explore whether Sullivan should hold Flynn in "criminal contempt for perjury."

Flynn pleaded guilty, as part of special counsel Robert Mueller's Russia investigation, to lying to the FBI about conversations with the then-Russian ambassador to the United States during the presidential transition period.

As part of the plea, he had to admit in court, under oath, that he lied to the FBI and violated federal law.

Justice Department spokeswoman Kerri Kupec declined to comment on Sullivan's order.

In January, Flynn filed court papers to withdraw his guilty plea, saying that federal prosecutors acted in "bad faith" and broke their end of the bargain when they sought prison time.

Initially, prosecutors said that

Flynn was entitled to avoid prison time because he had cooperated extensively with the government, but the relationship with the retired Army lieutenant general grew increasingly contentious in the months before he withdrew his plea, particularly after he hired a new set of lawyers who raised misconduct allegations against the government.

But the Justice Department filed a motion last week to dismiss the case, saying that the FBI had insufficient basis to question Flynn in the first place, and that statements he made during the interview were not material to the broader counterintelligence investigation into ties between Russia and the Trump campaign.

Officials have said that they sought to dismiss the case in the interest of justice, upon the recommendation of a U.S. attorney who had been appointed by Attorney General William Barr to review the handling of the Flynn investigation.

But Sullivan, who has to approve the motion, made clear Tuesday that he wouldn't immediately rule on the request and would let outside individuals and groups weigh in with their opinions in court documents.

Gleeson was a federal judge in New York for more than two decades. Before becoming a judge, he had been a federal prosecutor handling numerous high-profile cases, including the case against late Gambino crime family boss John Gotti. He's been in private practice since 2016.

Amid probe, Burr steps aside as chairman of intelligence committee

Associated Press

WASHINGTON — Sen. Richard Burr, R-N.C., temporarily stepped aside as chairman of the Senate Intelligence Committee on Thursday after the FBI served a search warrant for his cellphone as part of an ongoing insider-trading investigation tied to the coronavirus pandemic.

Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell announced the move, saying he and Burr had agreed that it was in the committee's best interests.

FBI officials showed up at Burr's home with the warrant on Wednesday, two people familiar with the investigation said Thursday, marking a significant escalation into the Justice Department's investigation into whether Burr broke the law with a well-timed sale of stocks before the coronavirus

crisis caused markets to plummet. The people spoke on condition of anonymity because they were not authorized to discuss an ongoing investigation.

The search warrant was served on Burr's lawyers, and FBI agents went to Burr's home in the Washington area to retrieve the cellphone, a senior Justice Department official said. The decision to obtain the warrant, which must be authorized by a judge, was approved at the highest levels of the department, the official said.

His attorney said in a statement last month that the law is clear that any senator can participate in stock market trading based on public information "as Sen. Burr did." The attorney, Alice Fisher, said that Burr welcomed a review of the stock sales, "which will

establish that his actions were appropriate."

Burr has denied wrongdoing but has also requested an ethics review of the stock sales.

Burr is an amiable member of the Senate, and his quick call for an ethics investigation and willingness to cooperate with authorities appears to have bought him some goodwill among colleagues tapping down immediate calls for him to step aside.

Senate records show that Burr and his wife sold between roughly \$600,000 and \$1.7 million in more than 30 transactions in late January and mid-February, just before the market began to nose-dive and government health officials began to sound alarms about the virus.

Several of the stocks were in companies that own hotels.

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NATION

Calls for removal of swastikas from vet cemeteries rejected

By ROSE L. THAYER
Stars and Stripes

AUSTIN, Texas — Three German soldiers' gravestones etched with swastikas will remain in national cemeteries in Texas and Utah, the Department of Veterans Affairs said Wednesday, despite demands from an advocacy group to have them removed.

Two gravestones of the German prisoners of war are in Fort Sam Houston National Cemetery in San Antonio and another one is in Fort Douglas Post Cemetery in Salt Lake City. The gravestones are placed among American veterans, some of whom fought against Nazi Germany in World War II.

The Military Religious Freedom Foundation, which attempts to protect religious freedom for service members, said it is demanding the VA remove the symbols, which were discovered recently by a retired colonel vis-

iting his Jewish grandfather's grave at the Texas cemetery. Mikey Weinstein, founder of the MRFF and a former Air Force officer, said he will not reveal the identity of the retired colonel, who fears reprisal from the VA.

Weinstein said he sent a letter to VA Secretary Robert Wilkie on Monday about the gravestones but only learned of the VA's response through media coverage.

The VA's National Cemetery Administration released a statement Wednesday that it "will continue to preserve these headstones, like every past administration has."

"All of the headstones date back to the 1940s, when the Army approved the inscriptions in question," according to the statement.

The headstones were in place when the cemeteries were transferred into the VA's cemetery administration. The Texas cemetery was absorbed into the VA system in 1973 and the Utah cemetery



Wikicommons

Headstone at the grave of a German World War II POW.

was in 2019.

"It's intolerable," Weinstein said. "This should not require explaining why this is wrong."

More so, he argued the headstones also display the phrase, which translated from German, reads: "HE DIED FAR FROM HOME FOR FUHRER, PEOPLE AND FATHERLAND."

But the VA said in its statement that "the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 assigns stewardship responsibilities to federal agencies, including VA and the Army, to protect historic resources, including those that recognize divisive historical figures or events." For that reason, the headstones will remain.

These three Germans are not the only POWs buried in American veteran cemeteries. There are 11 other national cemeteries with POWs from World War II interred, though none of the other gravestones include swastikas.

Ex-VA doctor charged in sexual assaults of vets

By ROSE L. THAYER
Stars and Stripes

AUSTIN, Texas — A former Department of Veterans Affairs doctor working in West Virginia was indicted on charges of sexually assaulting veterans, the Justice Department said.

Dr. Jonathan Yates, 51, is charged with five counts of depriving veterans of their civil rights and two counts of abusive sexual contact stemming from his 14-month stint at the Veterans Affairs Medical Center in Beckley, W.Va., according to the Justice Department. The charges are based on a criminal complaint against Yates filed Feb. 20 in the U.S. District Court for the Southern District of West Virginia.

Between September 2018 and February 2019, Yates examined six male patients, and sexually molested them during their appointments, according to the court documents. Yates, who served as director of the facility's Whole Health Clinic from about April 2018 to June 2019, is a doctor of osteopathic medicine and is trained in osteopathic manipulative therapy, which is a hands-on technique similar to ones used by a chiropractor.

Yates temporarily immobi-

lized two of the veterans — one by cracking his neck, and the other with the use of acupuncture needles — and sexually molested them while they were incapacitated, according to court documents. The indictment also alleges his abuses caused five of the veterans to suffer bodily injury and the way that he touched the veterans was not medically necessary.

One veteran told FBI investigators that Yates made suggestive comments during the visit.

After asking the veteran to remove his shirt, Yates massaged his bare chest and said he was "a real man."

Later, Yates said the veteran's choice of underwear was his favorite. Multiple patients said he would not immediately stop touching them after he was asked to stop and he locked or blocked the door to the exam room.

If convicted, Yates faces a maximum sentence of life in prison. He was arrested April 2 and later released on a \$10,000 bond and placed under house arrest, according to court documents.

thayer.rose@starsandstripes.com
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VIRUS OUTBREAK

Japan easing emergency, but not in big cities

Associated Press

BANGKOK — Experts on Japan's coronavirus task force on Thursday approved a government plan to lift a state of emergency in most areas ahead of schedule except for Tokyo and several other high-risk areas.

Economy Minister Yasutoshi Nishimura said after the task force met that the experts approved lifting the emergency in 39 of the country's 47 prefectures. Emergency measures would remain for eight others, including Tokyo, Osaka, Kyoto and Hokkaido, where risks still remain high.

Prime Minister Shinzo Abe had declared the state of emergency on April 7 for Tokyo and six other urban prefectures and later expanded it to the whole country through May 31. With signs of the infections slowing, Abe is seeking to relax the measure while balancing disease prevention and the economy.

Japan now has cases with 16,000 confirmed cases, with about 680 deaths. The number of new cases has significantly decreased nationwide.

Abe will explain details at a news conference later Thursday. Experts are also expected



EUGENE HOSHIKO/AP

A man wearing a face mask stands at a building window in Tokyo on Thursday. Experts on Japan's coronavirus task force on Thursday approved a government plan to lift a state of emergency in most areas ahead of schedule except for Tokyo and several other high-risk areas.

to provide the basis for easing the measure, as well as its possible tightening if there is a resurgence.

Ekime prefecture in western Japan, where an outbreak in a hospital has infected about 20 nurses, patients and their fami-

lies, will have the state of emergency lifted on the condition containment measures are taken and the infections are closely in-

vestigated, Nishimura said.

Experts and officials have urged people to adopt "new lifestyles" and continue practicing physical distancing measures such as remote-working and avoid out-of-town trips even after the state of emergency is lifted.

In China, some residential compounds in Wuhan have begun testing inhabitants for the coronavirus as a program to test everyone in the Chinese city of 11 million people in 10 days got underway.

One compound in the city's Qiaokou district said several hundred people had been tested since Wednesday. Another compound in the same district said Thursday it was registering residents before starting. The city ordered local communities to test everyone after six new cases surfaced last weekend, the first infections there in more than a month. Wuhan, where the virus was first detected last December, was the hardest-hit city in China with 3,869 reported deaths. China reported three new cases nationwide for 82,929 cases in total.

France, Germany, Italy vow to provide more economic help

Associated Press

ROME — European governments promised more relief to their citizens on Thursday.

France's government announced an 18-billion-euro (\$19.4 billion) plan to support restaurants, hotels and other tourist facilities that have been closed since mid-March amid the coronavirus crisis.

Prime Minister Edouard Philippe promised the French on Thursday that they will be able to go on vacation in France in July and August, including in French overseas territories, as the country has started lifting its lockdown this week.

Germany's parliament approved plans to increase the amount paid to people who spend months in a government-backed short-time work program during the coronavirus crisis. Companies are making extensive use of the program, which was credited with keeping down unemployment in the financial crisis over a decade ago. It allows them to keep employees on the payroll while they await better times.

Those announcements came after Italian Premier Giuseppe Conte promised a massive package of tax cuts and other financial aid to help businesses and families.

"Your cry of alarm didn't escape

us," Conte said late Wednesday.

His government also promised to legalize the status of foreigners, many of them illegal migrants who are crop-pickers, babysitters and caretakers.

Italy is one of the countries worst hit by the coronavirus. But U.S. has the largest coronavirus outbreak in the world by far: 1.39 million infections and over 84,000 deaths, according to a tally by Johns Hopkins University. Worldwide, the virus has infected more than 4.3 million people and killed some 297,000. Experts say the actual numbers are likely far higher.

The fallout from the pandemic includes heightened political tensions between nations.

In China, Foreign Ministry spokesperson Zhao Lijian, criticized the United States, saying authorities there have failed to effectively fight the global coronavirus pandemic and "abused American people's trust."

Zhao appeared to be firing back against accusations from the Trump administration that China mishandled or deliberately delayed releasing information about the outbreak, first detected in the central Chinese city of Wuhan late last year.

Zhao said the U.S. should "focus more on fighting the epidemic and safeguarding the lives and



GIAN ENHENZELLER, KEYSTONE/AP

A technician wears a protective mask during inspection work at the Heidelberg panorama cable car in the Schwarzwald, Switzerland, on Thursday. European governments promised more relief to their citizens on Thursday amid the coronavirus crisis.

health of the American people, and stop playing such [a] buck-passing game."

Australia said it will push for an inquiry into the origins of the coronavirus even if it hurts trade relations with China. Prime Minister Scott Morrison had been accused of playing "deputy sheriff" to the U.S. after calling for the inquiry.

Morrison brushed off the criticism, telling reporters: "We have always been independent, we have always pursued our national interests, and we always will."

The world's public health measures continue to provoke conflict between officials and the public.

In Ethiopia, police said they arrested over 1,000 people for refusing to wear face masks in public, while in Greece a spat broke out over a government plan

to install cameras in high school classrooms. The idea is to provide live-streaming to allow for reduced classroom attendance when schools reopen next week. But a privacy watchdog and a left-wing opposition party called cameras a serious privacy risk.

In many parts of the world, communities and individuals were finding inventive ways to cope with what many view as a "new normal." Apartment dwellers in Rio de Janeiro were getting much-needed entertainment from children's movies projected onto screens set up outside their buildings, similar to a drive-in theater. Cesar Miranda Ribeiro, president of city-owned RioFilme company, said the effort, called "Cinema in the Windows," is aimed at "trying to take care of the mental health of the people."

Back to jail for mobsters sent home fearing virus

Associated Press

ROME — Italian convicted mobsters who had been temporarily transferred from prison to house arrest for fear of coronavirus contagion are being brought back behind bars, the country's justice minister said Thursday, after their treatment was criticized as unduly lenient.

Alfonso Bonafede came under fire after more than 370 convicted mobsters and drug traffickers successfully argued they needed to be temporarily released to avoid becoming infected with the new coronavirus in prison.

Corriere della Sera daily on Thursday reported that one of the first inmates returned to prison was a convicted Cosa Nostra boss, Antonio Sacco. He won temporary release despite being incarcerated in a cell on his own under strict prison rules for mobsters, which include limited occasions to mingle with other inmates.

Responding to questions on Thursday from members of Chamber of Deputies' Justice Commission, Bonafede confirmed that mobsters were being ordered back to prison. "The (administrative) machinery has started to review the health situation of those who asked to get out" of prison on grounds they were at risk of catching COVID-19, the minister said.

WEEKEND

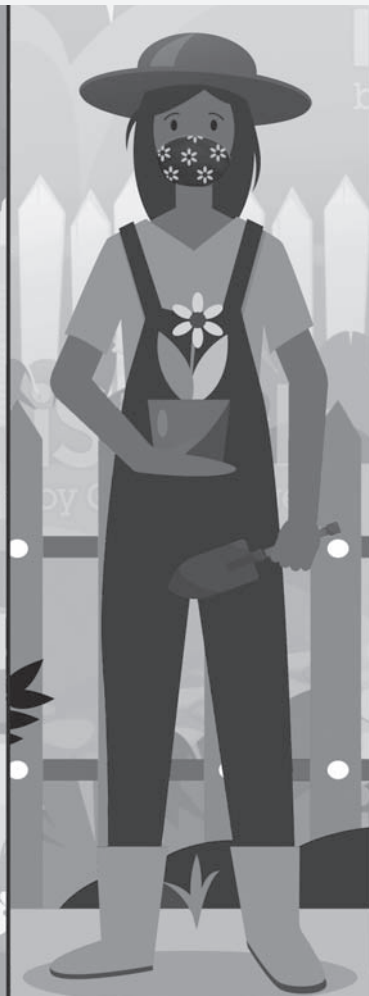


Tips to keep unruly locks in check
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Facial fashion

Masks have become the latest style accessory

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WEEKEND: GADGETS & TECH

SOCIAL DISTANCING



iStock

Creating a new normal

How the coronavirus is changing the workplace

By PRIYA ANAND
Bloomberg

When the headquarters of Mission Bio reopened in late April, employees found that many of the familiar perks they had enjoyed before Silicon Valley went into lockdown have changed.

Instead of the communal trays of catered lunches served a few times a week, each employee got his or her own boxed meal. The snacks will remain free, but the soda machine and tub of almonds will be replaced with canned beverages, bottled water and individually wrapped protein bites. One new benefit: Every two weeks, the startup plans to provide COVID-19 tests onsite to any staff member who wants one.

Mission Bio is returning to the office sooner than most businesses in Northern California. Officials have extended stay-at-home orders through the end of May, and some of the largest technology companies have indicated that they might keep offices closed for even longer.

Mission Bio, which develops cellular chemistry technology, said it decided to reopen after consulting local officials who determined that the startup's cancer research qualifies as essential. "Cancer didn't work from home," said Nigel Beard, the chief technology officer.

The startup's preparations for a return to the office offer a window into the unique challenges of adapting the Silicon Valley workspace to a pandemic. Mission Bio's desks are arranged in an open-floor plan, a mainstay of the tech office that's entirely incompatible with social distancing guidelines. The company will keep the office open seven days a week and ask employees to select shifts, so that only a third of staff are present at a time.

The biggest tech companies are taking similar steps for when they finally return to campus. Apple intends to stagger the introduction of employees back to the office, conduct temperature checks, keep people apart and create some kind of health checklist. Tim Cook, the chief executive officer, told employees in a virtual meeting last month. He said the Cupertino, Calif., headquarters won't reopen until at least early June and workers would likely be reintroduced on a "staggered basis."

Google, whose campuses are designed to draw employees together to their many cafeterias and volleyball courts, doesn't plan to return until at least June, either. The company expects to make changes to its open-office design before staff return, said a person familiar with the preparations.

Facebook is looking at ways to reconfigure its open-floor plan but is in no hurry to return because most employees can do their jobs from home, David Wehner, the chief financial officer, said. Amazon.com told corporate staff across the world that if they are able to work effectively from home, they can stay there until at least October. Those who come in will be given face coverings.

On the day tech workers finally do go back, the first change many will notice is on their morning commute. The shuttle buses provided by larger companies may not operate at full capacity, and some employers might encourage people to drive to avoid public transportation. Upon arrival, they'll find redesigned lobbies. To funnel thousands of workers safely, companies are looking to use design tricks like stickers on the floor or carefully placed furniture to create barriers, said Primo Orpilla, co-founder of the San Francisco-based interior design company Studio O+A, whose clients include Microsoft, Slack Technologies and Uber.

Tech companies are particularly concerned with changes that could compromise their carefully curated aesthetic. They're looking for an artistic version of crowd control. "If Shepard Fairey were in charge of making sure social distancing was part of your space, how would he do it?" Orpilla said, referring to the creator of the "Hope" Obama campaign posters. In a change that would please George Costanza of "Seinfeld," some clients are considering rebuilding bathroom stalls so the walls extend from the floor to the ceiling, he said.

Many companies are realizing that the open office — once considered forward-thinking for the way a lack of separation between workers fosters collaboration — is unsustainable. "Maybe that was innovative," said Andrew Holmes, the director of marketing at Loftwall, a Dallas, Texas-based maker of room dividers and desk partitions. "Now it just feels like a place for germs to run wild." Sales of Loftwall dividers have at least doubled since the coronavirus outbreak. Apple, Google, Microsoft and Tesla Inc. are among the companies that have placed orders with Loftwall in the past 18 months, Holmes said.

A cubicle revival might not be enough, said Phil Martin, head of security at San Francisco-based cryptocurrency exchange Coinbase. If a colleague coughs while standing up, for example, he or she could infect neighbors. Martin anticipates officials might set guidelines for offices, such as reducing the number of people allowed in buildings or requiring barriers between workers. He's making early preparations for Coinbase's eventual return, but the company said it doesn't expect things to get back to normal until January or later.

Some workplaces are more challenging to redesign. Xwing, a startup developing autonomous aircraft, used to conduct biweekly test flights at an airfield in Concord, Calif., before the pandemic. The company would pack three or four employees equipped with headsets about an arm's length apart from one another inside a small, noisy vehicle. The founder, Marc Piette, is trying to determine whether it's feasible to have fewer engineers in the air and whether microphones would still be able to pick up their voices when wearing face masks. "We're all about flying aircraft autonomously," Piette said. "If we can't fly aircraft, it becomes a difficult problem to solve."

GADGET WATCH

Get customizable sound with wireless earbuds

By GREGG ELLMAN
Tribune News Service

True, those incredibly popular true wireless white earbuds are great, but are they the best? If I was going to name another pair that I think gives them a run for their money, the nod goes to Sennheiser and the new Momentum True Wireless 2 earbuds.

I've said in this space many times, Sennheiser doesn't miss on headphones, earbuds or anything with sound quality. Add the Momentum True Wireless 2 earbuds to the list; they delivered and exceeded any expectations I had for the compact, portable sound machines.

The second generation of Sennheiser's Momentum true wireless series produces crystal clear audio from 7 mm dynamic drivers. For days I left the sound as is right out of the box since it seemed perfect.

Then with the built-in equalizer and Sennheiser's smart control app (iOS and Android), I tuned the sound for more personalization to my ears for the variety of my playlists. The personalized sound gives each user an option to make it what works best for them and goes so far as choosing which ear you tap to answer a call (microphones on both ears).

With Active Noise Cancellation technology on, much of the outside noise is blocked so you hear what you want. Specifically, Sennheiser describes it as when greater situational awareness is needed, the Transparent Hearing feature lets you blend in outside ambient sound at a touch, so you can have natural conversations in comfort without needing to remove the earbuds.

The new true wireless earbuds are designed with comfort for all-day use and have improved ergonomics, 2 mm smaller size than the previous model. Wearing them all day was no problem for me; I finally took them out after 7 hours of playback time to give the built-in lithium-ion rechargeable batteries a charge in the portable USB-C charging case.

With the case, you'll get a total of about 28 hours (7 from the earbuds, 21 more from the case) of on-the-go power to keep them playing. One and a half hours of charge-



SATECHI/TNS

Satechi's new USB-C Magnetic Charging Dock for Apple Watch

ing will give you a full charge or if you need something faster, 10 minutes of charging will get you an hour and a half of playback.

Touch controls on both earbuds are customizable to control hands-free calls, music selections, pausing and volume. Voice assistants have a one-touch access.

With auto-pause, just take the earbuds out of your ears and the music stops; when put them back in, it starts again.

Four sets of silicone ear adapter sets (XS/S/M/L) are included to ensure the right fit. With an IPX4 rating, they are splash-resistant.

Online: en-us.sennheiser.com; \$299.95

Charging is just a way of life at home, at work, at play and even at hospital bedsides. Apple Watch charging needs have launched a great variety of accessories.

When I got my hands on Satechi's new USB-C Magnetic Charging Dock for Apple Watch, I knew it was a winner.

Not only does it fit the bill for charging, but it fits my favorite category of ready for travel with its small compact size. The 1.73-by-2-by-0.45 inches, 3.1-pound-sized charger features an Apple Watch-certified charging plate with a space gray aluminum finish.

One side has a USB-C connector, which connects to any USB source providing power. That's it, there's nothing to wind up or tie together.

First and foremost, the charging works perfectly. With its USB-C connection built in, it plugs directly into your computer, USB-C tablets, AC wall plug or with an extension cable like the Satechi USB-C to USB-C extension 9-inch cable (\$12.99) to give it a little extra reach.

Online: satechi.com; \$44.99



The Sennheiser Momentum True Wireless 2 earbuds are now available in white as well as black.

SENNHEISER/TNS

WEEKEND: LIFESTYLE

Sneak preview

Movie-related toys and merchandise still hitting stores despite film delays

By JONATHAN LANDRUM JR.
Associated Press

Hollywood pressed pause on releasing most major films in theaters to combat the coronavirus outbreak, but that hasn't necessarily been the case for toys and merchandise related to those movies.

Despite film delays, toy production and gaming companies are often staying on schedule, releasing a variety of products tied to major titles from "Black Widow" to "Minions: The Rise of Gru" in hopes of weathering the pandemic. Most products are already in retail stores, appearing on shelves and being sold online several months to a year ahead of the film's new release date.

Some believe toy makers made the right choice to sell products now rather than later. Especially since many of the products have already been manufactured and packaged for sale.

"The train had already started moving on these toys, and there was no way to stop it," said James Zahn, senior editor at The Toy Insider. He doesn't expect those products to sell as quickly when there's no movie to support them, but he believes putting them on sale now is possibly the best option instead of being stored away in a warehouse, which he thinks is the worst-case scenario.

Zahn said quickly selling the toys and merchandise on clearance could be another option.

"It can become very costly," he said. "You're basically paying rent, monthly rent, to a warehouse. You need to turn that product quickly. Everything is on sched-

ule. Now, that schedule is out of sync. It's not just toys. It's a full marketing program that has multiple moving pieces between different licensing partnerships."

Cinemas across the U.S. have been closed since mid-March with many film releases postponed for a later date. Some states are looking to soon reopen theaters.

With most movie theaters closed, studios opted to funnel their new or recently released films on home viewing platforms. That happened with Pixar's "Onward," which played in theaters for weeks before it was forced onto a digital platform, making more sense for toy companies to continue to release their product to coincide with the animated film.

Marvel's "Black Widow" has been postponed until November, but products related to the film including toys and books along with characters from the film highlighted on a free-to-play mobile game. A collection of dolls are at retail stores for the live-action remake of the animated classic "Mulan," which was delayed until July 24.

Mattel said products for "Top Gun: Maverick," which had an original July release, will begin rolling out this summer and continue to launch throughout the fall leading up to the new release date on Dec. 23.

Films such as "Minions: The Rise of Gru" and "F9" from the Fast and Furious saga have been postponed for a full year, and "Ghostbusters: Afterlife" was delayed by several months. But products for those films can be found online.

LEGO has a particular plan in place for next year's "Minions" movie. "We recently launched two LEGO



CHRIS PIZZELLO/AP photos

A doll based on the upcoming film "Mulan," above, and toys based on the upcoming film "Black Widow," below, are on display at a Target store in Glendale, Calif., last month.

Minions building sets that are inspired by the property and characters, but we are holding back the rest of the collection that is directly linked to the upcoming film to coincide with the new premiere date," said Mike Iacocca, head of U.S. marketing for LEGO Group.

Zahn said the early release of products could be damaging for "F9" and "Minions." He also said there's a risk that the emotional connection could be harmed for the child or adult if they are unable to see the actual film. He calls the movie "a commercial for the product," especially for characters being introduced in the new films such as Taskmaster and Red Guardian in "Black Widow."

In many cases, viewers of the film may want to act out what they've seen. "Certain characters may become peg warmers, as they call it, where kids are buying the Black Widow, but they're not buying the other characters that they're just not familiar with on a collector standpoint," he said.

Teiko Duplessis, a mother of two, agrees to a certain extent.

"If you grew up watching Marvel movies, it's a win-win to purchase the merchandise, especially if you can't see the movie," said Duplessis, an Illinois resident who bought a Scooby Doo T-shirt while store shopping for her daughter. The shirt was tied to the Warner Bros. film "Scoob!," which will go straight to digital on May 15.



WEEKEND: LIFESTYLE



MAKE IT YOUR OWN

Face masks have entered the fashion scene, and they're quickly becoming a way for people to express themselves

BY ROBIN GIVHAN
The Washington Post

Fashion always finds a way. Human beings are undaunted in their search for ways to stand out, to communicate, to thrive in a treacherous environment. And so the face mask — once purely functional, once perceived as an exotic accessory — has evolved at breakneck speed into something more.

It's more essential because the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention has recommended that Americans wear a mask when interacting with others. It's more aesthetically pleasing. It's also a more complicated cultural proposition. And, of course, the face mask is political because both the president and the vice president have refused to wear one on highly public occasions and because some protesters have insinuated that masks are un-American.

As the country moves toward reopening, masks are assuredly part of our future. And

in some ways, their evolution is the perfect encapsulation of how much life has changed in a blink of an eye — and how challenging, both intellectually and emotionally, it will be for us to go forward.

"The question about face masks is, how will they morally change us? To some extent, the answer depends on our motivation for wearing them," says Liz Bucar, a professor of religion at Northeastern University. "If you are wearing a mask to protect yourself from others, you are forming a habit of fear. Every time you put a mask on, every time you see someone else wearing one, you will reinforce this fear.

"But if you are wearing the mask to protect others, wearing it will create a feeling of connection to those in your community," she says. "You'll see others wearing masks as a sartorial sign that they are willing to sacrifice some freedom and comfort for the common good.

"The meaning we give to these masks matters."

CONTINUED ON PAGE 21

WEEKEND: LIFESTYLE

FROM PAGE 20

In the beginning, which is to say in March, our experts said that healthy civilians didn't need to wear face masks. A nonmedical mask was superfluous because it could only protect the wearer from the microscopic droplets on which the virus traveled. The only purpose was to prevent the wearer from coughing and sneezing the infection on others — and if one was displaying those sorts of symptoms, you really shouldn't be out in the world.

In Paris, crowded international fashion shows were still unfurling as scheduled. A few design houses offered guests disposable masks — presented on a tasteful tray held by a handsome young usher at the entrance, the way a waiter might offer a glass of champagne. Unlike with bubbly, there were few takers. Those who did slip on a mask were rarely American and most often from Asia, where wearing a mask isn't a matter of fear or paranoia, but consideration for others. Consideration.

Yet even in Paris, the center of the fashion universe, the masks were basic. White. Black. (Surely you didn't think they'd be as awful as institutional blue?) Disposable.

By early April, a good Samaritan army of fashion industry workers was stitching up masks for first responders. They too were straightforward, generic. It didn't matter who was creating the masks — whether it was Louis Vuitton reinventing its leather-goods factories or independent entrepreneurs in New York or Los Angeles opening up their small ateliers. There were no logos. Function was the only consideration.

took less than a week from concept to e-commerce. And after about a week selling online, she's moved about 1,000 masks, with the most favored version a sequined one for \$20.

"It used to be that we really only saw tourists wearing them," Kim says, referring to visitors from Asia. "Now, we are those people."

There may be no other piece of clothing that has had a trajectory like face masks — something that began as purely protective transforming into a fashion statement in no time at all. "I've never seen anything like this," says Patricia Mears, deputy director of the Museum at FIT.

The closest comparison that comes to her mind is the parka. What began as lifesaving covering in Inuit culture took thousands of years to evolve into what is now a staple of winter life. Masks in various forms have also been around for centuries, but we've been drawn mostly to admiring their aesthetics or exploring their magical connotations. Pure, physical functionality didn't transfer to the masses. We didn't use masks.

The modern surgical mask — essentially multiple layers of gauze — dates to the late 1800s. For generations, masks have been common on streets in Japan and China, worn during cold and flu season or as protection from pollution and allergens, and gaining ground during the SARS outbreak.

Street-influenced menswear incorporated face masks into its vocabulary more than a decade ago. In the spring 2002 Raf Simons collection, presented not long after the 9/11 terrorist attacks, models stalked the darkened runway wearing face coverings that left little but their eyes visible. The masks referred to rebellion, to defying the establishment.



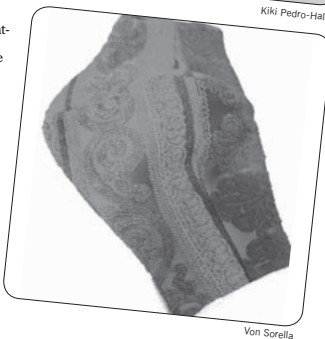
Von Sorella



Eugenia Kim



Kiki Pedro-Hall



Von Sorella

'The meaning we give to these masks matters.'

Designer Christian Siriano was using a pattern issued by the New York governor's office, and Fashion Girls for Humanity — a nonprofit organization founded in the aftermath of the 2011 earthquake in Japan — offered downloadable patterns and construction information gathered from medical professionals.

Soon, however, function met form. That same month, the CDC changed course and advised everyone to wear a mask in public. The fashion industry fully committed to the effort. If a shopper goes to Etsy, there are — at last count — 250 pages of colorful, patterned nonmedical masks to click through. Neighborhood blogs are filled with offers from home sewers willing to stitch up distinctive masks for locals.

There are masks for every taste and budget. Some are printed with Edward Munch-like open-mouthed screams. Goth masks mimic skeletal jaws. Disney is offering a preorder on four-packs of masks featuring its signature characters. High-end versions are constructed from fine Italian fabrics that really should be hand-washed rather than thrown into the Maytag. Others are covered in sequins. Some masks look to be so dense that they'd impede breathing; nonetheless, they're stunning.

Almost all of them come with a promise of a charitable donation or a reassurance that no one is profiting ... too much.

That's the unwritten rule, so far. Ronald van der Kemp unveiled one-of-a-kind masks in Amsterdam to benefit refugees. Some of them were more like fantastical, all-encompassing millinery than mere masks, as they were resplendent with gold chains, pearl-like beads and flowers. A designer is allowed to recoup expenses — materials and labor.

But there was a social media firestorm when images showed masks from Off-White, the coveted men's street-style brand, selling online for as high as \$1,205. (The masks were subsequently removed for price gouging.) Before the pandemic, Off-White's fashion masks were selling to its style-forward customers for about \$100, which is still quite expensive for two rectangles of cloth about the size of a pocket paperback.

But fashion pricing has never been based on actual value. It's calculated based on perceived value, which is driven by desire, status and rarity. Nonmedical masks have worth because of their function. We're not yearning for them. As a culture, we are just edging our way out of denial about what the near future holds and mincing our way to acceptance. And perhaps, the more stylish the masks become, the more willing people will be to put them on.

"I see people wearing masks for a while," predicts New York designer Eugenia Kim. And if people have to wear them, if they have to have this piece of cloth front and center on their face, why not make the best of the situation? "They're obviously functional, but I think they can be uplifting."

She compares these fashion masks to T-shirts. Useful and common, yet endlessly variable. And enduring.

Kim is a milliner. The addition of masks to her collection

The early fashion masks were a way to stand apart from a logo-driven, flashy society. They used anonymity as style statement.

Just after the presidential inauguration in 2017, menswear designers in New York incorporated face masks into their collections as part of a uniform of liberal protest of the Trump administration and its targeting of immigrants, minorities, women and the LGBTQ community. More recently, face masks have symbolized the dangers of climate change.

Masks, part of the greater universe of face coverings, stir up long-held stereotypes that frame the person behind the mask as dangerous or suspicious. We are leery of what we cannot see. The enduring image of bandits shapes that perception. But so do Islamophobia and racism.

Some black men have expressed their fear of being mistaken for an assailant if they enter a store wearing a mask, particularly a home-made one. They'd rather risk COVID-19 than an unpredictable encounter with police. And Asian Americans have faced verbal and physical abuse from those who blame them for a virus that first appeared in Wuhan, China.

"We've policed face coverings," says Bucar, the religion professor, who's the author of "Pious Fashion: How Muslim Women Dress." "It 'others' us to wear one."

But they are not likely to be discarded soon. "We've started thinking about how we'll deal with these masks on campus," Bucar says. "Will my kid use one in seventh grade? Will police officers?"

Already, masks are standard attire for grocery clerks and customers, delivery folks, Uber drivers, pharmacists and bartenders. It's not a leap to imagine visitors strolling through museums wearing masks, or music lovers attending an outdoor concert wearing one.

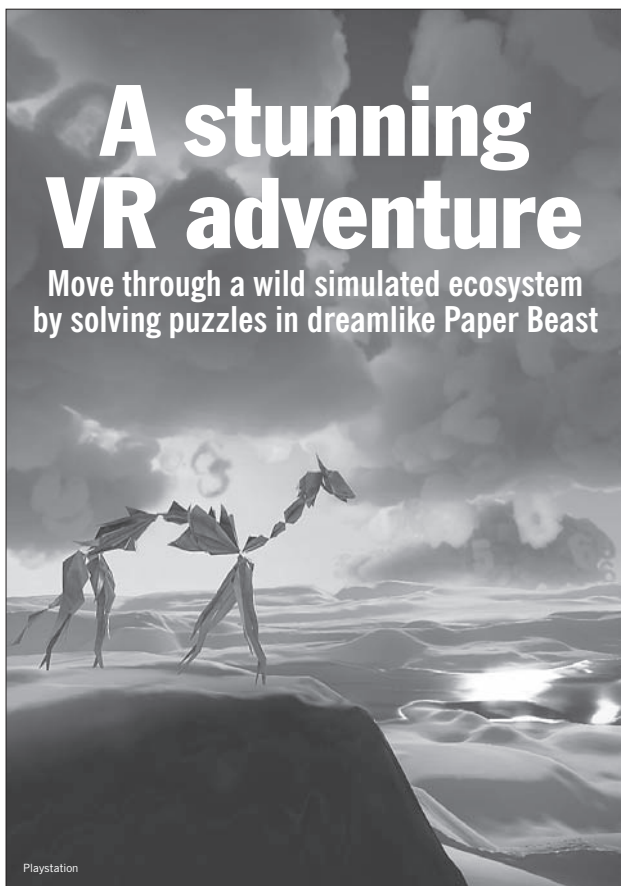
If masks become common, they can serve as a personal reminder of how one should behave in public. That's the power of a particular form of attire. It connects us. It's an expression of solidarity.

In Houston, designer Priscilla Von Sorella pulled Italian fabrics from her archive and stitched up masks from silk, velvet and metallic brocade. Are these little bits of sparkle lighting up the future? Expunging some of the fear?

"I thought, 'Why don't we bring a little bit of normalcy to our lives and express ourselves?'" Von Sorella says. "You would treat this like a high-end garment."

From top: An embroidered mask in Italian velvet from Priscilla Von Sorella; a sequin face mask by Eugenia Kim; A mask by Kiki Pedro-Hall made from a recycled dust cover; a silk mask by Priscilla Von Sorella.

WEEKEND: VIDEO GAMES



A stunning VR adventure

Move through a wild simulated ecosystem by solving puzzles in dreamlike Paper Beast

By Christopher Byrd

Special to The Washington Post

Perhaps it was when I unspooled tape from an old reel-to-reel player and created a beast out of its ribbons, or maybe it was when I saw a tree sprout hot air balloons. It also could have been when I watched an elephant lead a menagerie in an underwater procession.



Each is among the possibilities for the moment I decided that Paper Beast should be counted among the handful of truly great games available on PlayStation VR. Developed by Eric Chahi, creator of the renowned early '90s adventure game Another World, Paper Beast throws players into a hallucinatory cyberscape running on a quantum computer — a place that visually evokes the work of the surrealist painters Dali and Magritte.

Before running the quantum computer, you must tab through a user agreement that asks, among other things, if it can use part of your neural network while you sleep. Upon registering your responses, the computer sets about its quantum calculations and a pop-up text appears on the screen asking if you'd like to play the SwirlyBeat music app while you wait. Trust me, you do.

Clicking on the app transports you to your own private party: a small room festooned in confetti and streamers, pulsing with light and Japanese rock music. On the floor are rocks that can be grabbed and tossed using either the DualShock or Move controllers. As the song fades, a glitchy sound rings out and the environment goes dark. Then, in a wonderful transition, you find yourself standing on a narrow patch of terrain, surrounded on all sides by curtains, listening to the song from the music app coming from a reel-to-reel player on the ground.

Pulling aside the curtain reveals that you are standing underneath a dinosaurlike creature whose skeletal frame appears to be made out of spools of paper. Surrounding you and the creature is a desert whose bright colors and flat surfaces are like something out of a Dali painting. A little later you'll be in an elevated spot, overlooking a message scrawled in the sand: "this is not a simulation."

I'm reluctant to say much about the ensuing journey because one of the elements I most appreciated about Paper Beast was that I had no idea what to expect from one moment to the next — something I seldom experience in video games. That said, I don't think it's ruinous to say that the game involves observing the different paper beasts you encounter. You learn their goals and motivations and can then manipulate them for what are, generally, mutually beneficial ends.

Although ultimately innocuous, some of the solutions to the game's puzzles are still deliciously twisted. For example, one puzzle requires players to dangle the young offspring of a family of crabs out of their reach, prompting the adult crabs (inadvertently) to help out another band of desperate creatures.

The beasts themselves are a treat to watch. Their abstract forms complement the game's colorfully refined, low-polygon environments. Admittedly, I felt a bit like a psycho tossing some of them about and compelling them to do my bidding, but I promise not one crab was harmed.

Paper Beast is an inspired game that makes as good a case as any for the relevance of VR. Don't be surprised to see it on the year's best list.

Platform: PlayStationVR

Online: playstation.com/en-us/games/paper-beast-ps4

In Other Waters takes players on a journey through an alien ocean

By Christopher Byrd

Special to The Washington Post

In many ways, Gareth Damian Martin's *In Other Waters* feels like a game from another time. Its minimalist graphics fly in the face of much contemporary video game design that tends to prioritize visual appeal. For those of a certain age, the game's aesthetics may recall the PC games of late 1980s and early '90s, which emphasized the more technical aspects of travel — the instrumental readouts, trajectories between coordinates and the like. However, other aspects of *In Other Waters* — its hypnotic, atmospheric music and elegant text narrative — betray its more modern-day sensibilities.

In *Other Waters* tells the story of Dr. Ellery Vas, a xenobiologist who has spent much of her career exploring alien planets in a fruitless search for life. Her fortunes change after she receives a mysterious transmission from Minae Nomura, a former colleague and love interest, asking her to come to a planet that Vas assumes has already been ruled clear of life. On the ocean-covered planet, Vas finds a thriving ecosystem situated along an expansive coral reef.

Traveling amidst basalt towers, gullies and other underwater geological structures, Vas comes across various types of creatures ranging from fungal "stalks" that



communicate using spores, to creatures which resemble "diaphanous veils." To her knowledge, these are the first forms of life to have been discovered outside of Earth.

Mankind's home planet contains few warm memories for Vas, who thinks of it as a dead planet, a resourceless place left to those with too little money to leave it. (From now until who

knows when, expect to see more cultural objects that succinctly meld themes of climate change and economic inequality.)

Assuming the role of the AI system responsible for overseeing Vas' explorations, players spend the majority of their time poring over a nautical chart, lining up points for Vas to travel between (which appear as little triangles on the map) and operating the diving suit's various subsystems that handle tasks such as sample collection, propulsion, obstacle clearance and drone retrieval, i.e. fast travel back to your base.

Speaking as someone who is not exactly at home in cartography, I found it fascinating how, over time, I invested more and more meaning into those on-screen dots and squiggles that represent the various kinds of phenomena

that Vas encounters. At a certain point, I had no trouble seeing a canopy of stalks in a series of dots spread far-like over the screen.

I was able to find beauty in such abstractions through the lens of Vas' descriptions of her surroundings. So evocative are her observations that I couldn't help but read them with David Attenborough's voice in my head. For example, here is a description of the predatory Snare Veils: "Wide, delicate silken panels of bioluminescent cells, they work in unison to entrap and digest creatures which come too close." The edge of their chain is described as, "Here, the tangle is receding, a few of its trailing veils hanging still in the dark water like the poised limbs of a dancer."

As Vas continues her exploration of the planet, she trips over other mysteries that challenge her fundamental assumptions and make her rethink her relationship to her missing colleague, Minae.

In *Other Waters* is a game where observation becomes an end in itself. Its simple gameplay mechanics are supported by a quiet, vibrant narrative that works to put players into the mind of a working scientist.

If you're not put off by its low-key, text-centered nature, you may well find it to be one of the more serene games you have recently delved into.

Platforms: Mac, Nintendo Switch, PC

Online: jumpovertheage.com

WEEKEND: QUICK TRIPS

Europe



PHOTOS BY ERIK SLAVIN/Stars and Stripes

The Nuremberg Toy Museum features displays of toys made over the centuries, along with a few to play with.

ON THE QT

DIRECTIONS

Address: Karlstrasse 13-15, 90403 Nuremberg
Tram line 4, Hallertor stop; Bus line 36, Weintraubengasse stop; U-bahn, U1/U11 to Lorenzkirche stop, take Hauptmarkt exit.

TIMES

Closed recently due to coronavirus measures; check website for updates. Normally Tuesday-Friday 10 a.m. to 5 p.m.; weekends and holidays 10 a.m. to 6 p.m.; closed Monday except during the Christmas Market.

COSTS

6 euros for one adult, 12.50 euros for two adults and up to three children under 18.

INFORMATION

Phone: +49 (0)911 231 - 31 64; Online: museums.nuernberg.de/toy-museum
— Erik Slavin

A playful history

Nuremberg Toy Museum explores change through our toys

By ERIK SLAVIN
Stars and Stripes

Playtime for the average middle-class kid once meant preparation for work as an adult.

Dolls made in 19th-century Germany were exquisitely crafted, but they were probably also the inspiration for at least four different Hollywood horror films. By the early 20th century, the dolls displayed at the Nuremberg Toy Museum were ironing clothes and doing baby laundry. I guess the fun never stopped for girls.

Then again, I'm looking at it through a modern lens — maybe it made the girls happy to do what Mom did when that's what was expected, while the boys played with vast armies of tin and lead soldiers.

The museum's display of toys spanning the centuries says a lot about the times they were made in, from those early figurines and doll houses to the trains, cars, robots and foosball tables produced when a lot of today's adults were kids.

To be fair, it wasn't all drudgery in the olden days. Optical toys were the whiz-bang tech marvels of the 19th century. Museum guests can look at the 3D stereoscopic shows that made images move well before anyone had a night out at the movies.

The toys get more familiar as the 20th century rolls on, with sleek cars, plush toys and movie franchise collectibles. Toys and politics sometimes collided during the Cold War, as evident in a display of toys and propaganda from divided Germany.

The museum also has some dedicated displays, such as a replica of Omaha's Union Station. I'm not a train fanatic, but it was impressive. If you've got a zoom lens or great eyesight, check out the fine details. One of the miniature brick walls



Some toys for girls from the first decade of the 1900s, including this doll ironing and doing laundry, drive home just how much the concept of playtime has changed over the years.

includes an 1832 quote from Abraham Lincoln praising the railways, years before he became president.

Kids may spend some of the time wondering when they get to actually play with toys instead of mostly looking at them. The payoff comes upstairs, with plenty to do for mostly younger children, and a few things for tweens and adults with some kid left in them.

Normally, they have even more to play with in a large outdoor area from April 1 through October, though it's unclear if that area will reopen as coronavirus restrictions are eased. There are lots of classic games, funhouse mirrors and a hedge labyrinth. The museum also opens a courtyard cafe.

The toy museum, like all other museums, has been closed since March. But as Germany slowly opens back up again, if your comfort level is high enough to venture out, the museum is a nice way to spend a few hours while exploring the historic city.

slavin.eric@stripes.com
Twitter: @eslavin_stripes



A remarkably detailed model of Omaha's historic Union Station, as seen last October at the Nuremberg Toy Museum in Germany.



Cold War-era toys and collectibles, including a police vehicle and an East German translation of Mao Zedong's quotations, provide a fascinating glimpse into history.

WEEKEND: TRAVEL

Europe

Amsterdam enjoying respite from crowds

By TIM IGOR SNIJDERS
Special To The Washington Post

Amsterdam's historic Red Light District is rife with English-language city signs admonishing tourists: "Don't pee in the street"; "No alcohol in public spaces"; "Put your trash in the bin"; "Fine: 140 euros."

But the cartoonish black-and-red warnings on the 17th-century canals look strangely out of place these days. There are no visitors to heed them.

Beginning in mid-March, when the Netherlands went into semi-lockdown to combat the COVID-19 pandemic, tourism vanished from Amsterdam almost overnight. A social and economic crisis has hit the country and its capital hard. But for residents of Amsterdam's historic city center, there is a clear silver lining: temporary relief from the burden of overtourism.

Nowhere is the difference more clear than in the now-deserted alleys of the Wallen, as the red-light district is called. It is a major tourist draw, famous for the sight of sex workers soliciting from behind their windows and the many coffee shop operators can light up a joint. Here, noise is permanent, and nuisance a given. Tourists often leave trash and urinate in public.

But the Wallen is actually a primarily residential neighborhood. Charlotte Schenk, 35, lives in one of the brick canal buildings surrounding the monumental Old Church with her young family and has felt the changes firsthand. When asked what the current quiet means to her, Schenk's face lights up.

"It's just lovely. I've lived here five years, and I'm now getting to know neighbors I didn't know I had. They used to blend into the crowd," she says. "Now, when the sun is out, people take a chair and sit out front. It's so gezellig," she continues, using the common Dutch adverb that translates to "having a good time together."

Schenk, an executive assistant for FedEx Digital, can work from home during these times.

"It's like the city is ours again," she says, echoing a common sentiment among Amsterdamers who feel like their interests had become subordinate to those of visitors.

Aart Jaeger, 74, who lives on the canals near the Anne Frank House, another major landmark, feels the same way.

"The cause of this crisis is very sad, but for us it's a blessing in disguise," says the retired economist, returning from an unusually quiet grocery run: "Tourism here has become too much. We are sick of it, just sick."

Seeing the pristine metropolis, many citizens feel like they are wandering through the Amsterdam of the past. Tim Verlaan, an assistant professor of urban history at the University of Amsterdam, draws a parallel to what it looked like in the 1970s and '80s.

"The lockdown, of course, is unprecedented. But many Amsterdamers are reminded of a time when the city first and foremost was a place to live, and not to consume or play tourist," he says.

Back then, Amsterdam was in decline, the result of an economic and demographic crisis. Concurrently, living preferences were changing: City folk were moving to the suburbs looking for space.

For Amsterdam, that meant looking for new sources of income. "Before the corona crisis, you often heard people say that the constant growth of tourism was like a force of nature: unstoppable. But it has, of course, been a matter of policy," Verlaan explains. "The city government very actively promoted Amsterdam as a tourist destination."

Through a combination of economic prosperity, a lowered crime rate and shrewd marketing, tourism to Amsterdam exploded. Global trends contributed further: Airfare became ever cheaper as the traveling



LYV NIJHOUT/REUTERS/For The Washington Post

Residents of Amsterdam, normally one of Holland's hottest tourist destinations, have had the city to themselves for two months.

middle classes of Europe and the United States were joined by those in Asia.

From the 21st century on, the balance in the inner city was definitively skewed toward visitors. Hotel rooms multiplied, streets felt permanently overcrowded. The canal cityscape became the domain of tours, ticket offices and souvenir shops. And perhaps the biggest offense to locals? The ever-multiplying sellers of ice cream and waffles sauced with Nutella chocolate, now the dreaded symbol of a monocultural tourism industry.

Last year, 9 million tourists, mostly foreigners, visited Amsterdam, a city of 820,000 people.

"This is such an opportunity to reflect on where we go from here," says Els Iping, spokeswoman for VVAB, an organization that protects cultural heritage in the inner city and has been a vocal advocate of restoring the balance in favor of residents. "We are proud of our city, and we like to see others enjoy it. But the superficial type of tourism that has people pay pocket change to fly out here has to stop."

Follow Romans through the Rhineland-Palatinate region

The German state of Rhineland-Palatinate is a post-WWII entity created in 1946 from the territory of historically separate regions.

Some 2,000 years before it came into being, that same land was claimed by invaders from the south, the Romans who came and constructed their military bases and cities there. Andernach, Boppard, Koblenz, Mainz, Speyer, Trier and Worms are among the Rhineland-Palatinate locations with an extensive Roman heritage. Exploring the traces of what the Romans left behind could make an interesting theme for not-so-far-from-home travels for the tens of thousands of Americans stationed in this part of Germany. Here are some sights to incorporate on your Roman-themed tour:

TRIER

Both Trier and Worms like to claim themselves as Germany's oldest city, but Trier wins out in terms of size, having at one time been the largest city north of the Alps. The city is awash in Roman treasures, many of which are inscribed on the UNESCO World Heritage list.

Porta Nigra: The first foundation stone for the "Black Gate" was placed in 170 A.D., and this imposing and beautiful structure constructed of roughly 7,200 blocks of stone has been amazing visitors ever since. Nowadays it serves as a central source for information concerning the city's proud heritage. A multimedia guide brings the gate's history to life, from its beginnings in antiquity to its use as a church and a hermit monk's abode.

Imperial Thermal Baths: The construction of the Kaiserthermen began in the 3rd century A.D. The baths were planned as a gift to the townspeople from the Emperor before construction came to a halt.



Karen Bradbury

Visitors can see the remains of its subterranean service passages, and those who climb to its top are rewarded with a view revealing the size of the original imperial palace district.

Other must-sees on a trip to Trier include the Rheinische Landesmuseum Trier archaeological museum, St. Barbara Roman Baths, Thermen am Viehmarkt, amphitheater, and, outside of town, the Igeler Saeculae pillar tomb and the Villa Itranz, a well-preserved country estate with mosaic floors. Another highlight is the Romanbruecke, the oldest standing bridge in the country, which serves traffic crossing the Moselle River to this day. Online: zentrum-der-antike.de

MAINZ

Many signs of the Roman presence remain visible in the city they knew as Mogontiacum. Just opposite the place where the Main River flows into the Rhine, the Romans established a legionary base known as a castrum. The settlement grew and soon became an important military and administrative center. Mainz often served as the base for military campaigns into the east and north, and its riverside location made it attractive to traders and craftsmen. The Roman era of



ISTOCK

Trier, Germany, is known for its well-preserved Roman and medieval buildings.

Mainz came to an end around 406 A.D. **Roman amphitheater:** Behind the Romisches Theater train station, the remains of a vast theater uncovered during construction work initiated in 1914 can be seen. A glass wall alongside the station's furthestmost platform allows today's travelers a glimpse into these long-ago times. Better yet, hike up the hill for an unencumbered view.

Museum of Ancient Seafaring: During work in preparation for the construction of a Hilton Hotel back in 1981, the remains of seven Roman ships dating back to the fourth century A.D. were uncovered in the bed of the Rhine. These remains, along with two reconstructed galleys from the Roman Rhine fleet, and other original artifacts are displayed at this free-entry museum.

Other traces of Roman settlement in Mainz include the Cenotaph stone marker honoring Nero Claudius Drusus, stepson of Emperor Augustus and a general who led campaigns that stretched as far as the

Elbe River to the north; the remains of a Roman aqueduct, and the foundations of a temple for the worship of Isis in what's now the Roemerpassage shopping center. Online: tinyurl.com/yaj4wpv7

LIMES

The "Limes" represents the border of the Roman Empire at its most extensive during the 2nd century A.D. Along that part of its 3,000-mile distance is the Limes Germanicus, a small section of which runs through Rhineland-Palatinate. The traces of walls, ditches, watchtowers and fortresses that reveal its presence are inscribed on UNESCO's list of World Heritage sites. The Roemerwelt am Caput Limitus in Rheinbrohl serves as the official Limes information point for the state. Online: roemer-welt.de

Roman Mine at Meurin: This museum in the Eifel region illustrates how the Romans mined for tuff, a stone of volcanic ash well suited to their building projects. This award-winning museum shows off not only the site itself but the extraction techniques employed at the time. The mine is located in the town of Kretz, and makes up part of the East Eifel Volcano park. Online: roemerbergwerk.de

Roman Wine Press in Piesport: On the western outskirts of this charming town by the Moselle, traces of a building with more than 10 rooms and seven large tubs is evidence of an ambitious Roman wine-pressing operation.

At Piesport's annual Roman Wine Pressing Festival, town residents dressed in tunics and sandals enjoy the old methods on the present year's harvest of grapes, transporting spectators about 1,700 years back in time. The event is scheduled to take place Oct. 2-4 in 2020. Online: tinyurl.com/y9uyulpc

WEEKEND: FOOD & DINING

Europe

Theme-park munchies

Enjoy the taste of Disney at home

By GREGORY BROOME

Stars and Stripes

I'm a former resident of Florida and was a frequent visitor to the state's many fantastic theme parks. I missed those parks long before the coronavirus closed their gates, and I miss them even more intensely now. The experience of theme parks will doubtless change after the pandemic, and I'd rather it not change at all.

It's impossible to re-create the theme park experience under quarantine, but it's possible to indulge in some adjacent nostalgia. My family and I have extracted maximum value from our Disney Plus subscription, watching bizarre vintage films like "The Three Caballeros" and modern Pixar offerings like "Inside Out." Recently, my wife and I expanded this project by trying out a couple of recipes made famous at Disney theme parks and published this spring on the Disney Parks Blog.

We started by preparing cookie fries (recipe online at tinyurl.com/y9j2wrcr), a popular dessert served at Beaches & Cream Soda Shop at Disney's Beach Club Resort. The official version is vegan, but I found only regular Egg Beaters and Hershey's conventional chocolate chips at the commissary, so we couldn't replicate that aspect. We created the dough easily, put it in the refrigerator to chill and moved on to the main event.

Our entree was the Grilled Three-Cheese Sandwich (recipe online at tinyurl.com/yaovjt69) served at Woody's Lunch Box in the Toy Story area of Disney's Hollywood Studios. Grilled cheese is one of the few things I can competently cook, so I approached this recipe with confidence. But it proved a lot more complex than my usual sandwich.

This grilled cheese is made in three parts. First is a cream

cheese spread to complement the cheese inside the sandwich.

Next is a mayonnaise-based garlic spread for the outside of the bread. With the condiments made, the final step is to assemble the sandwich.

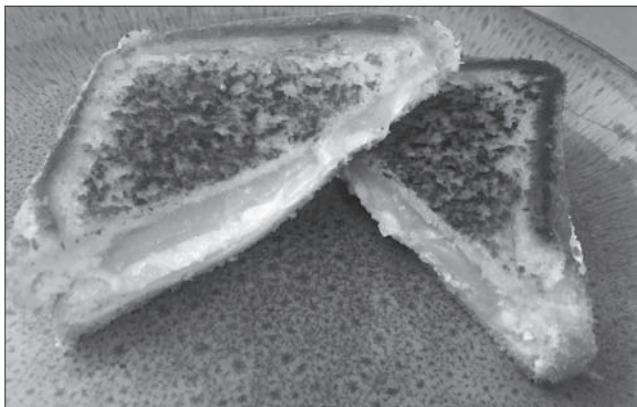
Again, we were prevented from following the recipe exactly, but this recipe seems pliable enough for some minor substitutions. We used shredded Colby Jack cheese in place of shredded cheddar and were forced to chop up a block of cheddar in the absence of sliced cheddar. Most egregiously, we scrapped the suggested artisanal bread for a loaf of decidedly nonartisanal Wonder Bread Texas Toast.

With assembly complete, we formed the chilled cookie dough into fry-shaped cylinders, popped dessert into the oven and started grilling one sandwich at a time in a frying pan.

The end result was an excellent lunch. The grilled cheese was so flavorful that I'll likely never return to my plain grilled cheese again without raiding the spice rack. I was initially skeptical about the intrusion of anything but cheese, bacon or ham inside a grilled cheese, but that cream cheese spread proved me wrong. The cookie fries came out plumper than the picture — more like cookie steak fries. But they were quite good, and the fact that my wife and I baked them from scratch made them more satisfying than the processed snacks with which we'd packed our quarantine kitchen.

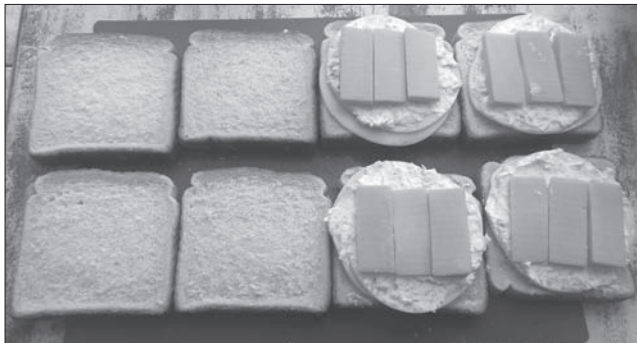
Who knows when it will be possible to walk around a bustling theme park again and get the authentic version of these treats, along with maybe a giant turkey leg and some churros? Until then, we'll do what we can. And in a time that demands comfort food, a tasty grilled cheese and chocolate chip cookies are about as good as it gets.

broome.gregory@stripes.com
Twitter: @broomestripes



PHOTOS BY GREGORY BROOME/Stars and Stripes

The Grilled Three-Cheese Sandwich, based on a dish served at Woody's Lunch Box at Disney's Hollywood Studios, can be created at home with ingredients you probably have on hand.



The Grilled Three-Cheese Sandwich is made in three steps: a cream cheese spread for inside the sandwich, a garlic spread for the outside of the bread and the final assembly of the sandwich.



The finished dough for Disney-inspired cookie fries goes into the refrigerator for 20 minutes of cooling before moving on to the oven.

Cookie fries, a homemade version of a popular Disney delicacy, is a great alternative to processed snacks. The original recipe is vegan, but can easily be modified.

WEEKEND: TRAVEL

Europe



Lockdown a la Nice

Detour lands family in the heart of a European coronavirus red zone

BY CHRISTOPHER ELLIOTT
Special to The Washington Post

Nice, France, is a city on hold. Its hotels are boarded up, its restaurants are shuttered and its residents are confined to their homes 23 hours a day. I detoured here on my way to Italy in mid-March, hoping to avoid a full lockdown. But a few days later, COVID-19 slammed France with unexpected ferocity, and the entire country turned into a red zone.

Today my rented apartment in the Jean Medecin district is a cage. French police and military patrol the streets. My three teenage kids and I are only allowed out of the house for an hour a day. Curfew starts at 8 p.m.

How did we end up here? That's a question I ask almost every morning while I'm pacing my cell.

This was supposed to be our last trip as a family before my oldest son left for graduate school. I had planned a yearlong adventure to show the kids the Europe I grew up in. I wanted them to hike the Alps with me, to see the Colosseum in Rome, to eat a krapfen at my favorite Kaffeehaus in Vienna. I could keep writing and since my kids are home-schooled, they could continue their education while we were abroad.

And for the first two months in Lisbon and Porto, it worked. But then, on the train from Barcelona to Marseille, we learned that Italy had closed. I made a snap decision to reroute to the Cote d'Azur and rented an apartment on Vrbo for the rest of the month.

In Nice, the museums closed shortly after we checked in. The next week, bars and restaurants shut down. Then the mayor tested positive for COVID-19. And within a few days, the city went from a vibrant Mediterranean tourist destination to a police state.



PHOTOS BY CHRISTOPHER ELLIOTT/The Washington Post

Top: The abandoned main shopping district near Boulevard Dubouchage in Nice, France, after the coronavirus lockdown. **Inset:** Two visitors defy social distancing protocols amid the coronavirus lockdown to enjoy a Mediterranean sunset in Nice.

France is one of Europe's coronavirus hot spots, with more than 177,000 cases. You can't leave your apartment without an attestation — a signed form that states you are buying groceries, exercising or going to work. You can print the form, write the information on a piece of paper or create an electronic document on your phone. If authorities catch you more than a kilometer away from your residence when you're out walking, you're looking at a fine of between 38 and 135 euros, or about \$41-\$146 in U.S. dollars.

"There are worse places to be stuck," a friend texted me after we arrived.

Well, that depends on your circumstances. I'm in an apartment with three teenagers. The boys (ages 15 and 17) are taking online classes at the University of Arizona. They're also learning several languages, including Portuguese, Spanish, French and Japanese. My daughter, 13, is in ninth grade and works with an online tutor four days a week. When we talk, it's about what we'll do after this ends. Should we return to the States? Or stay in Europe as planned, finishing our journey?

The best part about being trapped in

an apartment with adolescents is that you never run out of food. They're constantly at the nearby Monoprix supermarket replenishing our supply of cereal, fruit and fresh baguettes. Teenagers are like hummingbirds, eating twice their weight in a day. That's only a slight exaggeration.

The worst part? No, it's not the eye rolls and the "Dad, you just don't get it," responses to every other question. The worst part is not knowing whether their in-ear headsets are on. To find out, just ask them a question. Silence means the headsets are blasting music or language lessons.

The kids aren't afraid of getting caught outside. Their paperwork is always in order and they quickly adjusted to the strict social distancing rules. Also, their French is much better than mine.

Come to think of it, no one seems overly worried about the police. That's because this confinement isn't just uniquely French, but southern French. Every day while I'm on my government-sanctioned walk, I see the police in the same places: near the main thoroughfare along the

CONTINUED ON PAGE 27



A sign greeting shoppers at the Monoprix grocery store in Nice explains the steps it is taking to prevent new infections.

WEEKEND: TRAVEL

Europe

FROM PAGE 26

beach, the Promenade des Anglais; on the main shopping district at Avenue Jean Medecin; and in the town squares. Avoiding a checkpoint is easy, and the police make little effort to enter the narrow streets of my neighborhood to find scofflaws who resist the lockdown.

In the early days of confinement, the streets looked unnaturally empty, like those in a Warner Bros. studio tour. People took the threat of a pandemic as seriously as anywhere else. But it didn't stay that way for long. A nonessential chocolate shop defied the lockdown last week. Yesterday, I walked past a bar that had opened its door a crack. Inside, I could see people enjoying a beer.

Although authorities barricaded the beach, that hasn't stopped some residents from crossing the line. I watched one woman duck under the tape and stroll along the water's edge as pedestrians on the other side of the road nodded approvingly.

This is a lockdown a la Nice. My attestation allows me just one hour outside. I wish I had more. Springtime in Nice is an event you should savor at least once in your lifetime. A Mediterranean breeze carries the heavy scent of orange blossoms through the city. The overgrown gardens have delivered a tide of purple and red flowers. You hear them before you see them, thanks to a deep buzzing of insects feasting undisturbed on nectar.

The people I meet fall into two categories: masked and maskless. Those with masks move quickly, often crossing the street to avoid me. The non-mask-wearers stop to talk to each other and don't seem to care if you get too close. Most of the maskless Niceans are elderly or homeless, but I also see young people sans protection. I recently saw two men shaking hands in public. In a world obsessed with social distancing, that's the ultimate sign of defiance.

The U.S. Embassy in Paris emails me every few days, warning me that I should be prepared to remain abroad for an "indefinite" period. But for how long? The French president announced France's lockdown would end on May 11. My lease was to run out a few days before then. Should we stay in Nice and wait until the "all clear"? If we press on, do we go to Italy or double back to England, which is more familiar but further behind on its COVID-19 recovery?

Or do we come home? That's tempting, except that I sold almost everything I owned—including my car and house—before embarking on this odyssey. If we returned, we'd have to start over. I'm not even sure where we'd go.

For now, there's the daily and predictable routine of 23 hours in an apartment. There are walks down abandoned, orange-blossom scented avenues, trips to the boulangerie and supermarkets and more conversations with the children about our uncertain future. I hope when this is over, they will return here to see the France that I remember— not to this beautiful prison.



CHRISTOPHER ELLIOTT/The Washington Post

French troops patrol the streets of Nice during the coronavirus lockdown. The military was deployed as part of Operation Sentinelle after the 2015 terrorist attacks; they have stepped up their presence during the COVID-19 outbreak.

Short-term outlook grim for Nice's tourist industry

Nice is France's second most visited city, after Paris. But its hotels, restaurants and tour operators are closed indefinitely, and there are almost no signs of life.

"We have never faced anything like this," says Denis Cippolini, president of Nice's hotel and restaurant association.

The tour operators and hotels are closed and sometimes boarded up. There's some scaffolding at the Radisson Blu Hotel near the beach, but it's hard to tell whether it's still being used. A crew is working on the roof at the Hotel Locarno in the Thiers part of town. Otherwise, all is quiet.

"Everything is dead," says Caroline Conner, a sommelier who used to run wine tours from Lyon, France. "I loved my business and my customers, and I will return to them once tourism wakes up again. But many of my fellow tour operators won't be able to survive that long." Her survival strategy: shifting to online wine education on her website, win-edinecaroline.com.

One of Nice's resident wine scholars, Viktorija Todorovska, has also embraced virtual wine education to get her through this dry spell. On her site, sipsatshare.com, she's started to post videos with tips on everything from wine buying ("Don't buy a wine based on the label") to storing wine ("Always in the refrigerator, even red wine").

There are some positive signs. The Tour de France, though postponed, is still scheduled to start in Nice this summer. It will be a long way back to a booming tourist industry for Nice, as it will for the rest of the world.

— Christopher Elliott

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WEEKEND: TRAVEL

Magical thinking

Some fans eagerly await parks reopening; others will stay away

By DEWAYNE BEVIL
Orlando Sentinel

Fans of Orlando's theme parks are anticipating the reopening of attractions, and they're forming their first-day-back strategies. Walt Disney World, Universal Orlando and SeaWorld Orlando have not revealed details or return dates from their coronavirus-imposed lockdown.

But enthusiasts are weighing their pent-up desires to go back to Central Florida attractions against their health concerns and fears of big crowds.

"I miss everything. I have so many great friends that I only see at the parks, so I definitely want to go on the first day or definitely within the first week," said Michael Muldoon, who lives in Lakeland, Fla. "I'm going to follow the safety measures. Even my mom wants me to go because she can see how bored I am."

But anxiety is winning over entertainment for Kristen Pettineo, who has visited Disney World every summer since she was a child. Now she has her own 3-year-old daughter who's obsessed with "Frozen."

"For me, personally, I don't plan on visiting until there's either a vaccine or a cure," Pettineo said.

Executives and experts have listed possible changes in store for theme parks worldwide. Among the considerations are limiting the number of people allowed inside, date-specific ticketing, virtual queues, intensified sanitation procedures, face-covering requirements, temperature checks and an emphasis on the six feet of separation between people that's suggested by the Centers for Disease Control.

Some of those measures and others were in place when Shanghai Disneyland reopened more of its resort on Monday.

The modifications also discourage Pettineo, who lives in Austin, Texas.

"If I'm going to be wearing a face mask, if I'm not going to be able to meet characters, if I'm not going to be able to ride all the rides and experience the parades ... I just don't know if that's even worth it," she said.

Danny Bogue, a Disney World annual passholder from Orlando, agrees.

"Putting all health issues aside, I just don't even understand why people would want to go," he said. "I feel like if I were to hold out for the old normal, it's going to be ... a long time before I get to go to a theme park."

He's looking for more government action, testing and public buy-in for the safety suggestions.

"My stance is that once I start to feel more comfortable about going to Publix every week, then maybe I'll start to consider Disney," Bogue said. "I know there are people out there ... that just are more or less throwing caution to the wind."

Sharon Rudolph, who lives in Sarasota, Fla., and has annual passes to Disney World and Universal, has canceled two outings to Orlando, including one with her family set to toss beads during the Mardi Gras parade at Universal Studios.

"It was a life experience. We were going to go on the floats. I was so excited. We had packed," she said. But concern about her Type 2 diabetes status and because she lives with her 76-year-old mother caused her to reconsider even before the parks shut down. She thinks it will be six months to a year before she ventures back.

One reason: She thinks visitors won't play by the rules. "I'm absolutely sure, 100% confident, that people won't follow them. Because, as evidence, 'Please no flash photography' ... 'Please select a row and move all the way to the end of that row.' ... They're not following the rules that Disney puts into play now," she said.

Even with limited park capacity, she wonders about the six-foot clearance between strangers.

"Where are people going to go? There's not enough



JOE BURBANK, ORLANDO SENTINEL/TNS

Guests wave goodbye to Mickey Mouse and friends on March 15 at the Magic Kingdom near Orlando, Fla., the final night of the theme park's operation before the shutdown.



SAM MCNEIL/AP

Visitors wearing face masks wait to enter the Disneyland theme park in Shanghai as it reopened Monday.

physical land space for everybody to maintain six feet at all times," she said.

Inram Siddiqui and his family make many trips a year from Boca Raton, Fla., to Orlando's theme parks. His wife is a frontline physician in a COVID-19 unit in a South Florida hospital, and their strategy is to visit sooner rather than later.

"I think we're going to be among the earliest people there because we think the park will be the cleanest. We think the staff will be the most vigilant and then we think the public will be the most vigilant," he said.

He expects a surge of coronavirus cases in the fall, but he also expects Disney and other theme-park companies to follow effective procedures.

"This can't go sideways," Siddiqui said. "They have to do this right."

Still, there are elements of the attractions he will avoid, he said.

"I think we wouldn't do enclosed spaces with any strangers," he said. He mentioned the Millennium Falcon: Smugglers Run attraction at Disney's Hollywood Studios, the monorail that runs to Magic Kingdom and Epcot along with other slow-moving rides.

Park visitors are re-evaluating once-innocuous circumstances that now raise questions. They wonder how parks will handle hands-on attractions such as Men in Black: Alien Attack at Universal Studios and Toy Story Mania at Hollywood Studios, or the small pre-show areas for the Antarctica attraction at SeaWorld and Haunted Mansion at Magic Kingdom as well as tightly designed spaces of the Wizarding World of Harry Potter at Universal's theme parks.

Park operations and logistics interest Brian Baker,



RICARDO RAMIREZ BUXEDA/Orlando Sentinel

Disney World usually looks more like this scene from a past season. The parks near Orlando have been empty since March 16 because of coronavirus precautions.

a Disney annual passholder who lives in Altamonte Springs, Fla. He plans to go on the first day the parks are open.

"I'm interested in ... what changes security has made in regards to touching people's personal items because that's now going to be a huge thing," he said. "I mean, it was huge before the closure but even more when they reopen, whenever that is."

He also wonders about the resort's transportation system.

"That doesn't mean I'm going to be on a bus," he said.

"It just means that I'm going to be observing whether they're letting people on buses."

Baker says he's safety-conscious.

"But I don't also think that you should be scared of Disney World for the next six months, either," he said.

Bernard Pettiford, a passholder from Orlando, says his wish list includes lower park capacity and a lot of hand sanitizer.

"I am definitely dying to go," he said. He recently had a short staycation in a hotel near Disney.

"I was literally maybe five minutes from the park, and it just made me sick knowing that I couldn't even really drive over there because there's nothing to see," he said.

Also on his wish list is a ride on Hagrid's Magical Creatures Motorbike Adventure, a roller coaster at Universal's Islands of Adventure. Although his favorite park is Disney's Animal Kingdom, his next stop is Magic Kingdom, Pettiford says.

"For me, going back there first is going to make Disney feel real again," he said.

WEEKEND: LIFESTYLE

Quarantine hair, DO CARE



Don't pick up those scissors without first learning from these experts

By TREVA LIND
The Spokesman-Review

Shacky locks. Overgrown bangs. Wild hair everywhere. Six weeks or more into quarantine, we've either executed hair carnage or thought about it. Salons and barber shops have stayed closed so far because of the coronavirus pandemic, and it's uncertain when "quarantine hair" will end.

Some local pros are offering tips to help in the interim. Mostly they suggest to use styling tricks to tame unruly hair — or to trim a tiny bit — as you wait it out.

"I would recommend mostly to hold off if you can — there are always fashionable hair clips or tucking hair behind your ear," said Tammy Brewer, stylist at Creative Hair Design in Spokane Valley, Wash. "Of course, were you to try cutting your hair, I'd recommend only cutting your bangs and only cutting them dry. There is a little trick where you grab bangs and twist them up together, then trim off a little bit. It makes it look more layered, not cut straight across."

That avoids bangs in a straight line — the bowl cut of youth — unless you want a blunt look. For the whole mop, messy buns or a ponytail can work. And then there's always baseball caps.

"Try styling techniques first, like if you have bangs, try to push them over to the side and use different styling products or techniques," said Terri Brazil, stylist and owner of Salon Nouveau in Spokane, Wash.

Some local salons have posted tips on social media, including Salon Nouveau, with a recent Facebook series for styling bangs while growing them out.

Learning to cut hair is visual, so search for videos by styling professionals. Take off a little if necessary, Brazil said.

"A lot of hair can be very forgiving, especially hair that's thicker or kind of

has a curl to it," she said. "Fine hair, not so much."

Trimming tools

Consider your hair's texture and length. Is your hair wavy or fine?

Then go slow. If you can, get help from a quarantine mate. Gather up salon-style scissors or clippers, a comb and a towel to wrap around one's shoulders. You can use hair clips to separate manageable sections.

"Maybe get the old Flowbee out," joked barber Mike Lester. He's taking over operations at Tom's Barber Shop in Spokane Valley, and self-remodeling it until it can reopen.

Flowbee, a 1980s hybrid of vacuum with hair clippers, has enjoyed a resurgence. People also are buying clippers or finding ones in storage.

"They're into buzzing their hair off pretty much by the time they're done," Lester said. "The phone has been ringing all day long at the barbershop. They're saying, 'What do I do with the clippers? Do I need a size 2 or 3?'"

He knows it's been challenging to keep shorter trims for men. Some firefighters, law enforcement officers and military members seek "flat top" haircuts every two weeks for a style that's tight on the sides and faded up into a "landing strip," Lester said.

"I say, 'Just have the wife use the clippers,'" he said. "Fade it up with a 2 and be sure to go straight up and not too far into the top where it's rounded."

For better use with clippers, hair can be a little drier. After trimming the sides, use a flat-top comb and carefully go across the top with a smaller blade leaving a quarter inch, or half inch on top, he said. Some people also leave the top hair fuller toward the front.

For longer trims, use a No. 2 with a light touch straight up on the sides, too, then

maybe use scissors for the top and corners to blend. To avoid nicks to the ear, "Hold the ear down and carefully go around the ear," Lester said.

Jennifer Turner cuts hair for women and men at Tom's Barber Shop. She's fielded calls about home haircuts, and it's more complicated than people realize, she said.

"I tell them there is a YouTube video that shows you how to buzz cut your hair," she said.

Hairstyles and bangs

Turner tries to convince her female customers to let their hair grow out for now.

"When someone tries to cut long hair, it turns out uneven," she said.

If a trim is a must, find videos.

"On YouTube, it will show you how to comb the hair as straight as you can, stop the comb on the back where you want to cut it and then use the scissors to cut just beneath the comb to make the straight line," she continued.

Layers are complex.

Inexperienced cuts can get uneven fast, said Stephanie Tullus with New Beginnings Hair Salon, in Spokane.

"You'll have a lot of layers you don't want," Tullus said. "I cut women and children's hair, and there are so many nationalities and different textures of hair. With curly hair you have to be super careful, because curly hair is just naturally in different layers."

Back to the bangs, try just a quarter-inch trim to avoid overdoing. Those fringes can shrink up or get jagged fast. If you use a comb to cut, be careful not to stretch the bangs.

A cowlick might require leaving a section slightly longer to blend.

Avoid going too short with wavy hair, Lester said. "You might get Mamie Eisenhower bangs."

Brazil still supports using styling prod-

ucts and techniques first for bangs, but using tricks if you must cut.

"One thing is, try to look straight ahead and not look up at your hair, because you'll end up with way shorter bangs. I'd definitely cut it dry," Brazil said. "Do little tiny increments. Start in the middle and work out to the sides."

For kids, it's better to wet hair down so you can get a good line on the back for the length and around the ears, Lester said, adding that it's fine to use scissors.

Brewer said guys and little boys might just need a trim at their sideburns and around their ears. With summer coming, let it grow, "as long as it's clean and brushed."

Those roots

Some of Brewer's customers get hair color every three weeks. She's had the desperate calls.

She said root touch-up products can help, versus hair color kits.

"No highlight home kits," Brewer said. "Those are always the best to fix."

"We use the professional mix with the correct hues, so you can have a natural look," she added. "Many of the box blondes are touchy. They can go orange."

Brazil also suggested root sprays: "You can even use eye shadow to touch it up."

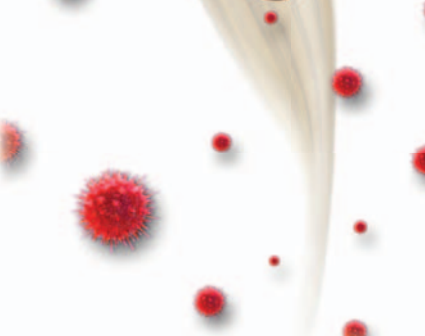
Hair condition

Stay-home time offers hair self-care time.

"Once a week, do a conditioning treatment," Tullus said. "You also can do a protein treatment, which is right in your refrigerator — eggs or mayonnaise. I'd do that once a month, put on a plastic cap, leave that on for 30 or 40 minutes, then wash it out and your hair will have a really healthy sheen."

Take care of your hair and hold on, Brewer said. "Just don't get crazy; we'll be back to work soon."

WEEKEND: LIFESTYLE



By RACHEL SCHNALZER
The San Diego Union-Tribune

Think about your first day in quarantine. Does it feel like a lifetime ago? Or does it feel like yesterday?

Many people staying at home as a result of the coronavirus crisis are noticing time pass more strangely than usual. While some complain of days dragging on and on, others have taken to social media, explaining they feel the past several weeks have flown by eerily quickly.

Turns out, science can provide some insight into why our perception of time is a little wonkier than normal while in quarantine. Here's what the experts say:

Why does it feel like time is passing more quickly?

"Time does seem to be going really fast," agrees Claudia Hammond, author of "Time Warped: Unlocking the Mysteries of Time Perception," noting that it's our perception of time that feels unusual, separate from the way time actually works. In our minds, "time can warp very easily," she says. But why does this happen?

For those staying at home during the pandemic, it has a lot to do with our worlds shrinking to the bare minimum — staying at home for the vast majority of the day, with trips outside only for exercise or a visit to the grocery store. For the most part, we are not taking part in particularly memorable activities, like getting drinks with a friend, going to a sporting event or traveling, says Marc Wittmann, an author and research fellow at the Institute for Frontier Areas of Psychology and Mental Health in Freiburg, Germany. Now, there are fewer signals differentiating a Sunday from a Monday.

And if you're doing the same thing every day — the new normal for many in quarantine — there's no need to remember each day specifically. Even if time passes slowly in the moment, it's likely that nothing will stand out upon looking back, causing you to perceive time has passed by quickly in the long run, Wittmann explains.

"The more emotional a memory, the longer perception of time duration." This is why a weekend vacation will often feel longer than a weekend spent at home. And right now, many in quarantine are experiencing the opposite of a vacation, Hammond notes. "We're not making loads of new memories now, so we don't think lots of time has passed."

James Broadway, an instructor of psychology at Lincoln Land Community College in Illinois, who has studied the brain's perception of time, notes a similar phenomenon occurs when we age. The older we get, the fewer novel events we experience, which causes time to feel as if it's going by faster than it did earlier in our lives. Hammond points out that a similar phenomenon can happen to people who are sick or incarcerated. Time will pass slowly as it's experienced, but then feel as if it's gone by quickly in retrospect.

However, if you've felt as though time has taken a long time to pass during the pandemic, even retrospectively, you're not alone. Adrian Bejan, a professor of mechanical engineering and materials science at Duke University, believes it's possible the novelty of the quarantine experience could actually explain why weeks may feel like they're dragging to some.

"The brain remembers the unusual," he explains, and if our new routines are suddenly different, our brains

would be bombarded with images worth remembering. This would then result in the perception that time is moving slowly over the quarantine experience, though it's likely time will feel as though it's speeding up again as the quarantine becomes more familiar.

It's also important to note not everyone has the relative luxury of feeling bored while in quarantine. Many people are busier than ever, whether they're working in a hospital on the front lines or at home balancing a full work schedule while trying to homeschool their children. It's possible people who are busier than ever during the coronavirus crisis will look back and feel as though this period of their lives lasted longer than normal, Hammond suggests.

"When they look back, it will be the other way around," she says.

What can we do about it?

Our altered perspective of time can be useful during quarantine. Normally, when we're bored, we have a plethora of options in front of us, like going to the gym or meeting up with friends. Now, we're being challenged to spend time alone or with others in our household.

"This could be a chance to learn how to cope with boredom and isolation," Wittmann explains. "Learn to be at ease with being with yourself."

If you're feeling anxious and have difficulty coping with being alone, it's helpful to have a goal, he says. Whether you're aiming to exercise more or clean your apartment regularly, having a physical task to complete may help assuage feelings of stress and take your focus off the passage of time. Take advantage of having more time at your disposal to do new things, Bejan says.

Finding events to look forward to can be similarly helpful in passing the time, Hammond notes. Though we can't look forward to vacations or physical outings with friends, she suggests re-creating the feeling of having plans by scheduling a virtual happy hour on Friday night or creating a Sunday afternoon film club, which you're able to look forward to all week long.

"Make the weekends different from the weekdays," recommends Hammond.

Meditation may also be soothing for those suffering from anxiety in quarantine, Broadway suggests, saying, "It's a really good opportunity to embrace doing nothing." If all else fails, Bejan suggests those in quarantine "get into the habit of looking at things you were previously overlooking." Focus on minute details — the way the trees look on your street, the way the steam floats off your tea. After a few minutes of taking your mind off the passage of time, you might be surprised to find time has a funny way of speeding up after all.

Corona Standard Time

Are the days flying by? Are they dragging?
Or has only our perception changed?

WEEKEND: TELEVISION & DVD

NEW ON DVD

“Onward”: Tribune News Service film critic Katie Walsh says this animated adventure from Disney/Pixar finally brings mainstream representation to the fantasy-obsessed metalhead. Chris Pratt voices older brother Barley, a burly chap in a battle vest with an affinity for all things Dungeons & Dragons and Magic: The Gathering, or rather, the generically branded versions. In his trusty steed Guinevere, an old purple van airbrushed with a mighty Pegasus, Barley blasts sweet heavy metal tunes about wizards and beasts and magic.

This isn't Barley's story, though he's an integral part. This is the story of his younger brother, Ian (Tom Holland), a shy young elf who discovers that he does, indeed, have a little magic in him.

Walsh writes that “Onward” contains potentially the most morbid example of the Disney dead parents trope, which they've relied on for decades. Dead parents have been the easy shortcut right to emotional stakes for the young characters. But “Onward” literally embodies this ever-present longing for a lost loved one, as Ian and Barley drag their father's sentient legs around with them on their quest.

Despite that, Walsh says “Onward” plucks all the right heartstrings to produce many laughs and many tears. “Emma,” Autumn De Wilde, a music video director, makes her feature debut with “Emma,” adapted from Jane Austen's novel by Eleanor Catton. Tribune critic Walsh says that De Wilde deploys everything at her disposal to execute an expertly choreographed and designed film highlighting the arch attitude of aristocratic culture and behavior in Regency England.

Every cinematic element joins in a delicate dance to create a carefully constructed confectio as sweet as one of the pastries they devour at tea, Walsh writes.

Also available on DVD **“Sonic the Hedgehog”:** Jim Carrey and James Marsden star in the movie adaptation of the Sega video game.

“The Way Back”: Ben Affleck stars in the story of a high school basketball coach who bounces back from addiction.

“Brahms: The Boy II”: Katie Holmes stars in a creepy killer doll sequel to 2016's “The Boy.” **“Wildlife”:** Carey Mulligan and Jake Gyllenhaal star in the tale of a fractured marriage.

“Behind You”: Horror movie about two sisters running afoul of the supernatural in their aunt's creepy house.

“Buffaloed”: Zoey Deutch stars as a young woman desperate to get out of Buffalo, N.Y.

“Call the Midwife: Season Nine”: The latest happenings at Nonnatus House in the beloved PBS drama.

“Creepshow Season 1”: Latest adaptation of Stephen King's horror tales on the Shudder streaming service.

“Fear the Walking Dead Season 5”: Another season of the spinoff to “The Walking Dead.”

—Tribune News Service



ABC/AP photos

The combination photo show Wendi McLendon-Covey as Beverly Goldberg in scenes from “The Goldbergs.”

Unraveling the mystery

How sweaters became scene-stealers on comedy ‘The Goldbergs’

By BROOKE LEFFERTS

Associated Press

The character Beverly Goldberg on ABC's hit comedy series “The Goldbergs” can elicit laughter before she even speaks, thanks to the over-the-top outfits that are a love letter to the mother of the show's creator and to 1980s fashion.

“No dialogue necessary,” laughs “Goldbergs” star Wendi McLendon-Covey, who plays the overbearing but lovable Beverly on the show.

The tops always start with the shoulder pads, then the embellishments. Details range from hanging beads, flashy sequins, ribbons, fringe and ruffles, to phrases like “What's shakin' bacon?” and “I'm so flappy!”

The wig McLendon-Covey wears — blond bangs and feathered layers that flip out like wings — also helps inform her character, who can be tough and opinionated, smothering and meddling, but also loving. “I've got my armor on, my helmet and my shoulder pads and then I'm good to go. I understand my mood for the day based on what I open my closet and find,” McLendon-Covey told The Associated Press in a recent interview.

Costume designer Keri Smith creates the signature looks for the fictional Beverly, who is inspired by creator Adam Goldberg's real-life mother, also named Beverly. The character has a wardrobe his mother would have envied back in the day, with a minimum of five costume changes per episode, each a one-of-a-kind work of '80s nostalgia.

When the show first started in 2013, the real Beverly shipped boxes of sweaters and accessories she'd saved for decades to Smith. Many have made appearances on the show, which airs its season finale Friday on AFN-Pulse.

“It was amazing and it helped me grasp who she was,” Smith told the AP. “And that was important for Wendi, too ... to know that she was actually legitimately wearing something that Beverly Goldberg wore.”

Smith and her team of costumers also shop at vintage stores and on eBay and Etsy for Beverly's sweaters, but most need extra bedazzling for maximum scene stealing.

“If I know that Beverly Goldberg is on a mission and she is trying to do something for her son at the school, she's going for it. She's either in full bedazzle, or (the sweater) has, like, lions or tigers on it,” Smith said.

Since fans are often looking out for Bev's wacky garb, Smith and the writers have had to up their sweater game.

“There was once a sweater that was made up of a bunch of different little teeny sweaters that spelled out ‘sweater.’ Try sourcing that,” McLendon-Covey said.

The “sweater” sweater made Smith proud, but it was a journey to get it right and win Adam Goldberg's approval.

First, she cut out her own idea — sweaters made of cloth — but Goldberg told her to start over and find actual knitted sweaters. With only one day to get it done, Smith found a way.

“This woman knits little tiny sweaters, like as ornaments, on Etsy, and I was able to contact her,” Smith explained. “She FedExed them overnight. We made little hangers out of paperclips. And then you look at it and it's ... 500 times better than my first one. He's right. That's what it was supposed to be — little tiny actual knit sweaters. Genius!”

The outfits have become such a key part of the show that fans regularly mail sweaters to Smith.

“If a fan sends something in, I am using it for sure. And they all have good taste,” Smith said.

“And then we let them know when it's airing. And it's just wonderful. It's like everyone gets to feel like they're involved.”



Costume designer Keri Smith creates the signature looks for the character of Beverly, who is based on the show producer's mother.

WEEKEND: MUSIC



DREAMTIME/TNS

While quarantined because of coronavirus, many people have been posting Top 10 list of albums that influenced their taste to Facebook.

Facebook's '10 albums' challenge climbs the charts during quarantine

By CHRIS RIEMENSCHNEIDER
Star Tribune (Minneapolis)

For diehard music lovers, there's nothing like compiling a top 10 albums list to while away a few hours — or to get into heated debates with a few of your equally nerdy friends.

This popular pastime has taken on new heights — and maybe greater meaning — during the coronavirus quarantine. One version of it, in particular, has become increasingly popular as a welcome distraction in recent weeks, to the point where many of us aren't seeing much else on our Facebook feeds:

"I have been nominated by (insert friend's name here) and given the task to choose 10 albums that greatly influenced my taste in music," goes the post. "One album per day for 10 consecutive days. No explanations, no reviews, just album covers."

In what amounts to a Facebook version

The results have sometimes been surprising (i.e., "I didn't know you were old enough to be a Leo Sayer fan"), aggravating ("How could you possibly think 'The Black Album' is one of Metallica's better ones?!"), insightful ("That Danzig record maybe explains your anger management issues") and touching ("I love you more for loving Anita Baker").

of a chain letter, participants then post one record every day and tag another of their friends each time to follow the same challenge. And so on.

The results have sometimes been surprising (i.e., "I didn't know you were old enough to be a Leo Sayer fan"), aggravating ("How could you possibly think 'The Black Album' is one of Metallica's better ones?!"), insightful ("That Danzig record maybe explains your anger management issues") and touching ("I love you more for loving Anita Baker").

"I was asked to do an 'essential' 10, and that's extremely difficult," said Christy Costello, a Twin Cities rock musician with Butcher's Union and the Von Bondies, bar booker at Dusty's and a gigging DJ.

"I'm thinking back at the different points in my life and what music was transforming me then, and if it still reaches me the same way now."

CONTINUED ON PAGE 33

WEEKEND: MUSIC REVIEWS

**Shelby Lynne**

Shelby Lynne (Thirty Tigers)

There's hardly a song among the 11 on Shelby Lynne's first solo record since 2015 that fails to mention love, and even the exceptions stay on theme.

The self-titled album is in part the soundtrack to an unreleased film she stars in, "When We Kill the Creators," and some of the songs were recorded live on set.

Though many of the lyrics are from Cynthia Mort, the film's screenwriter and director, it is Lynne's name on the cover and it still sounds like one of her most personal collections.

Lynne, who often acts here as her own backing band, once again travels the fine line between happiness and heartbreak, making both feel necessary.

Love and relationships are presented in many phases and guises — celebratory ("I Got You"), nostalgic ("Weather"), yearning ("My Mind's Riot," which includes a Lynne sax solo) and resilient ("Here I Am"), among others.

Though there are some notable guests like Benmont Tench on a few songs, most of the arrangements are translucently elementary, and it's Lynne voice that carries the emotional weight.

Even with highlights throughout, there's a definite mid-album peak with "Revolving Broken Heart," "Off My Mind" and "Don't Even Believe in Love."

The first is one of those hushed cries of despondency Lynne excels at. It's followed by a slice of southern soul in the Aretha Franklin mold, with Lynne playing all the instruments. Finally, comes a sleek tale of inevitability, one of the few tracks with a full band behind her.

Lynne, who with sister Allison Moorer released an album of covers stretching from Merle Haggard to Nirvana in 2017, makes this album one of the purest in her canon and makes one curious about the film.

— Pablo Gorondi
Associated Press

*Reunions***Jason Isbell & the 400 Unit**Reunions
(Southeastern/Thirty Tigers)

Jason Isbell long ago earned his place among the finest songwriters of his generation. Now he's just pouring it on.

On "Reunions," Isbell's seventh full-length album and fourth with the 400 Unit, the four-time Grammy winner firms up his place on the short list of artists whom you could draw up a list of 25 best songs and start real arguments. It's territory typically reserved for people such as Isbell's late pal and mentor, John Prine, but Isbell keeps proving he belongs there.

As Isbell works the vortex between folk, country and rock, a range of influences surface, including Prine, but the sound is distinctly his own. A master of lyrical surprise, Isbell paints childhood summerscapes, recalls secret meeting places and then pierces the rapture with reminders of brokenness and hurt. In "Dreamscicle," for example, the taste of ice cream on a summer night gives way to mama "curling up beside me, crying to herself."

A different kind of friction animates "Overseas," where a guitar hook that would make Tom Petty proud lends majesty to a wistful lament about separation.

The album's early singles, "What've I Done to Help?" and "Be Afraid," will play well in concert, but there are better songs here. Isbell is at his best when he's leaning into life, where things are never easy.

The 400 Unit shines throughout. "River" features Isbell's wife, Amanda Shires, playing fiddle and it's glorious. When Isbell sings a lyric, Shires plays a little flourish that sounds like she's demonstrating what he just sang about — like commentary. She's been doing that for years, but it's still a marvel.

Isbell's music has that grow-on-you quality that makes it hard to measure instantly against his previous work. That's not a flaw, to be clear — and it's safe to say this album will start some new arguments.

— Scott Stroud
Associated Press

FROM PAGE 32

With her list still coming together at this writing, Costello thinks she's going to keep naming albums past the allotted 10, if only for the much-needed fun of it: "No parents, no rules" when you're enjoying something in a quarantine," she quipped.

Asked why he participated, Mambos's Combo and Greazy Meat singer Julius Collins admitted, "I never do the Facebook challenges. But I am indeed bored."

Collins compiled one of the more surprising and varied lists out there, including everything from R&B pioneers Rufus "Rags to Rufus" to folk duo the Indigo Girls' self-titled 1989 album and jazz-fusion band Weather Report's "Heavy Weather."

Some participants make a point of choosing less obvious picks to tell a little more about themselves, since naming "Thriller," "Sgt. Pepper's" and "Nevermind" doesn't really reveal unique tastes.

Veteran record-store operator Ryan Cameron of Let It Be Records could have gone way more obscure than most participants with his picks, like the lesser-sung Ornette Coleman LP on his list ("Dancing in Your Head"). But he also chose "Meet the Beatles."

"I pretty much had to," said Cameron, who now operates primarily as an online seller. "Not only did I pick a Beatles name for my store, but my musical exploration as a kid pretty much started with the Beatles."

Cameron's idea to make his list

more focused — and thus easier to compile — was to "mostly stick with albums that were big in my youth."

"Otherwise, 10 is clearly way too few a number for folks like us to name our essential albums," he said, pointing to his brother-in-law's own list as one he was particularly interested in seeing.

"We've talked music a lot, but I didn't really know a lot of his earlier influences. It's a good way to get to know a little more about people."

Costello joked that sometimes

she has found out things about people she didn't really want to know, based on their picks in the challenge: "Every once in a while I'm taken by surprise. You know: 'I thought we were friends! Sheesh!'"

More often, though, the Facebook exercise has helped repark her passion for music while she's sidelined from live gigs.

"It's inspired me to look up records I haven't for a while," she said. "I've found some treasure along the way."

Alysse Galkjen

WEEKEND: BOOKS

A baseball card-fueled road trip

‘The Wax Pack’ author traveled the US to meet 1980s athletes, learn their stories

By DENNIS WASZAK JR.
Associated Press

Brad Balukjian tore open a pack of 1986 Topps baseball cards, chewed the stale, brittle bubblegum and then planned a road trip most sports fans could only dream about.

The college biology professor set out to meet every player whose image appeared on those old pieces of cardboard—from Garry Templeton to Rick Sutcliffe to Carlton Fisk—and see what life after baseball has been like.

“Whether it’s musicians or artists or baseball players, I’m just fascinated by what happens when they’re done after the spotlight,” Balukjian said in a telephone interview with The Associated Press.

“I always wanted to do something about those guys I grew up with. And I saw the pack as the perfect device to get a random sample of players from that era.”

The self-funded trip in 2015 cost about \$8,000 and took him across 30 states over 11,500 miles in 48 days. What Balukjian learned is vividly documented in his recently published book, “The Wax Pack,” which has quickly become a favorite among baseball-hungry fans during the coronavirus pandemic.

“When I actually started doing the trip and talking to these guys, that’s when it really became a lot bigger,” Balukjian said. “It was transcending baseball and talking about these bigger themes like what is our relationship like with fear, which is a universal question that we all deal with. Baseball players and athletes, in general, they have to master fear to be successful. Call it fear, call it anxiety, whatever you want to call it, it’s all fear.”

“And the lessons that they passed on to me about what their relationship was like with fear, it’s something we can all benefit from.”

“The Wax Pack” journey began in 2014 when Balukjian was sitting in the upper

deck of Oakland Coliseum watching an Athletics game and realized he wasn’t as familiar with the players on the field as he once was. As a kid growing up in Rhode Island, he followed the game religiously and baseball cards—boxes of them—provided easy links to his heroes on the field.

So, Balukjian ordered a few unopened packs of Topps cards on eBay from 1986, the first year he recalls collecting. The 15-card pack he picked included four of

stars (Fisk, Sutcliffe, Dwight Gooden and Vince Coleman), solid players (Templeton, Lee Mazzilli, Steve Yeager, Gary Pettis and Richie Hebner) and non-stars—called “common” cards in the hobby—such as Rance Mulliniks, Randy Ready, Jaime Coanower and Don Carman. Balukjian’s childhood favorite is player: Also included were a checklist and the late Al Cowens, whose chapter is arguably the book’s most intriguing.

“I didn’t mix cards between packs because that would definitely be cheating,” Balukjian acknowledged. “Also, I didn’t keep opening packs until I got Don Carman because that would be kind of cheating, too.”

Balukjian spent about nine months planning his trip, researching the former players and exchanging letters, emails, texts and phone messages with them and their families to set up meetings.

What transpired is detailed over 275 pages in “The Wax Pack,” which took Balukjian a few years to get published before University of Nebraska Press took a swing—complete with a wax paper-like cover.

Several of the former players shared tales of personal successes and failures with Balukjian, whose adventures included visiting a zoo with Carman, getting



Brad Balukjian

‘The Wax Pack: On the Open Road in Search of Baseball’s Afterlife’ tells the story of how author Brad Balukjian, pictured left with former major league outfielder Lee Mazzilli in Rye, N.Y., in 2015, tried to track down all the players in a single pack of 1986 Topps baseball cards on a road trip across the U.S.

a hitting lesson from Mulliniks, watching kung fu movies with Templeton, lifting weights with Ready and desperately trying to chase down Fisk.

There were a few players Balukjian didn’t link up with, but he managed to turn those setbacks into entertaining chapters.

He also weaved aspects of his own personal life into the book, including his struggles with obsessive-compulsive disorder and anxiety, briefly reuniting with a lost love and reliving moments of his childhood.

“I mean, it’s almost a self-help book as well,” Balukjian said, “because you can get these little bits of wisdom from these players.”

The 39-year-old Balukjian, who teaches

at Merritt College in Oakland and is the director of the school’s Natural History & Sustainability program, has maintained relationships with many of those featured in the book.

Despite the overwhelmingly glowing reviews of “The Wax Pack,” Balukjian isn’t planning on hitting the road for a sequel when social distancing and travel restrictions are lifted.

“It’s not tempting creatively because I just don’t think I could match it,” Balukjian said. “I think the novelty of that idea is gone and that’s OK.... I get asked this a lot, but I’m like, hey, man, if anyone out there wants to write about another wax pack, like you could franchise this and do other sports and other years, and I would gladly read someone else’s book.”

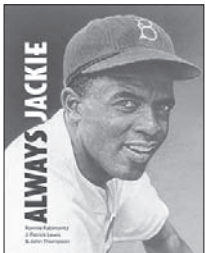
Pen pal helps keep baseball great’s story alive

By PAMELA HUEY
Star Tribune (Minneapolis)

On April 15 every year, players from the American and National leagues—all wearing No. 42—line up on the baselines as a tribute to one of the greatest players of all time, Jack Robinson. It didn’t happen this year because baseball has been sidelined with all the other sports.

But Jackie was not forgotten, especially in the heart and mind of Ron Rabinowitz, of St. Louis Park, Minn., who has spent his life honoring the legacy of the player who broke Major League Baseball’s color line on April 15, 1947.

Young Ronnie of Sheboygan, Wis., became the unlikely pen pal and then friend of the Brooklyn Dodgers infielder in the 1950s. In later years, Rabinowitz has spoken to classes across the Twin Cities and at Target Field, where schoolchildren take tours of the Minnesota Twins’ home field. He was featured in an MLB



documentary about No. 42, and the Minnesota History Theatre produced a play about the Wisconsin boy and his baseball hero.

Now, Rabinowitz has co-written a children’s book, “Always, Jackie,” just the way Robinson signed his letters to Ronnie. “I put down notes about my life and my history with Jackie with the intention of writing a children’s book,” the 74-year-old retired

salesman said. “I don’t want anyone to ever forget him.”

The result is a beautifully written and illustrated book published by Creative Editions in Mankato and co-authored by J. Patrick Lewis, with drawings by John Thompson. Publisher Tom Peterson explained the book’s attraction this way: “The message of Ron’s story to children is no different from the story’s message to adults. Friendship supersedes race, religion, age and celebrity. If our hearts and minds are open to the blessing, lasting friendship can be found in the most unlikely of places, between people who at first glance seemingly have nothing in common but in fact share the most important of characteristics—a genuine care and concern for others.”

Rabinowitz has told his story numerous times. The friendship started with a letter from Ronnie’s lawyer father, David Rabinowitz, to Robinson, who wrote back. Young Ronnie wrote, too, and would get letters in

return and even an invitation to meet Robinson the next time the Dodgers played the Braves in Milwaukee. That incredible meeting in September 1955 included a visit to the locker room at Milwaukee County Stadium where he met other Dodger greats: Duke Snider, Pee Wee Reese, Roy Campanella, Carl Furillo, Gil Hodges and even rookie pitcher Sandy Koufax, who all signed a baseball for him.

The next book takes note of that momentous occasion and others. One entry reads, “What young man can say the other guest of honor at his 10th birthday party was the great Jackie Robinson? Or that he was taken by the hand inside a major league dressing room by the man himself to get a baseball signed by every Brooklyn Dodger?”

The book describes simply for its young readers the daunting challenge Robinson faced: “Jackie Robinson, a four-sport athlete, endured a lifetime of prejudice, yet he continued to play the game he loved most amid arrows of

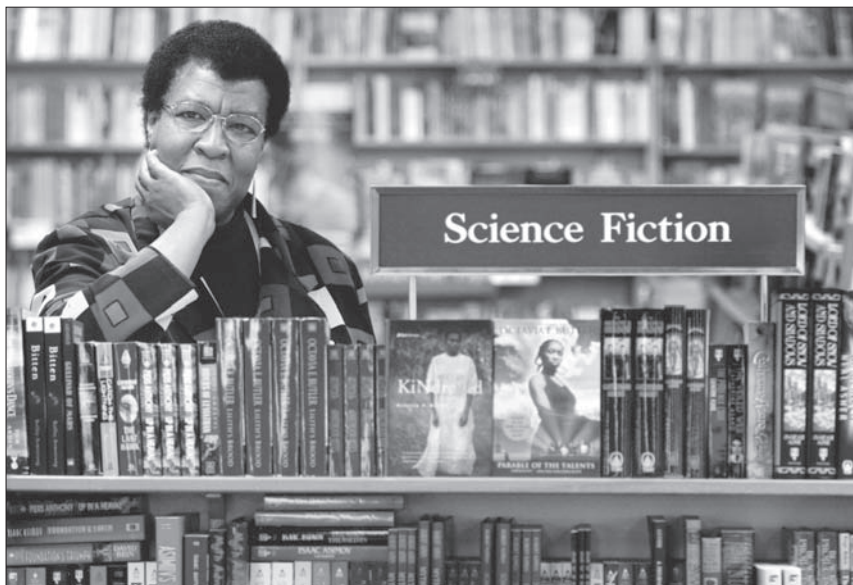
insults in stadiums of bigotry.”

Robinson died in 1972 at 53, but his widow, Rachel Robinson, 97, also keeps Jackie’s story alive. In 1997, when the Twins retired No. 42, Rabinowitz finally got to meet her. “You’re Ron Rabinowitz? Lord have mercy,” she exclaimed as she hugged him. They sat together for several innings watching the game.

It was in a letter to Rachel at the time of Robinson’s death that Rabinowitz expressed how her husband had changed his life.

“I learned from Jackie the true meaning of being a man,” he wrote. “I learned how cruel and full of hate some people are to others. And probably most important of all, I learned never to back down on a cause you truly believe in, no matter what the odds against you might be. These are important things for a boy to know while growing up, and I will always cherish those moments and recall the beauty of a friendship between a man and a boy.”

WEEKEND: BOOKS



Author Octavia Butler poses near some of her novels in 2004 at University Book Store in Seattle. Butler, considered the first black woman to gain national prominence as a science fiction writer, died in 2006, at age 58.

Foretelling the future

14 years after her death, Butler's novels seem more relevant

BY HILLEL ITALIE
Associated Press

Novelist N.K. Jemisin was a teenager the first time she read Octavia Butler, and nothing had prepared her for it. It was the 1980s, and the book was called "Dawn," the story of a black woman who awakens 250 years after a nuclear holocaust.

"I remember just kind of being excited that a black woman existed in the future, because science fiction had not done that before," said Jemisin, whose "The City We Became" is currently a bestseller. "There was just this conspicuous absence where it seemed we all just vanished after a while."

A revolutionary voice in her lifetime, Butler has only become more popular and influential since her death 14 years ago, at age 58. Her novels, including "Dawn," "Kindred" and "Parable of the Sower," sell more than 100,000 copies each year, according to her former literary agent and the manager of her estate, Merrilee Heifetz. Toshi Reagon has adapted "Parable of the Sower" into an opera, and Viola Davis and Ava DuVernay are among those working on streaming series based on her

work. Grand Central Publishing is reissuing many of her novels this year, and the Library of America welcomes her to the canon in 2021 with a volume of her fiction.

A generation of younger writers cite her as an influence, from Jemisin and Tochi Onyebuchi to Marlon James and Nnedi Okorafor, currently working on a screenplay for the Butler novel "Wild Seed" for the production company run by Davis and her husband, Julius Tennon. Davis, in a recent interview with The Associated Press, said she began reading Butler while attending the Juilliard school 30 years ago.

"I felt included in the narrative in a way I had never felt reading anything before," said Davis, who has a deal with Amazon Studios. "There is something about seeing yourself in the imagination's playground that opens up your world."

Alys Eve Weinbaum, a professor of English at the University of Washington, said Butler broke open a genre "dominated by white men and white readers." She is now praised as a visionary who anticipated many of the issues in the news today, from the coronavirus to climate change to the election of President Don-

ald Trump. In her 1998 novel "Parable of the Talents," the right-wing Andrew Steele Jarret runs for president in 2032 with a message familiar to current readers.

"Jarret insists on being a throwback to some earlier, simpler time. Now does not suit him. Religious tolerance does not suit him," Butler wrote. "There was never such a time in this country. But these days when more than half the people in the country can't read at all, history is just one more vast unknown to them."

Jarret's campaign theme: "Help us to make America great again."

"She (Butler) seems to have seen the real future coming in a way few other writers did," said Gerry Caravan, an associate professor at Marquette University who is co-editing Butler's work for the Library of America. "It's hard not to read the books and think 'How did she know?'"

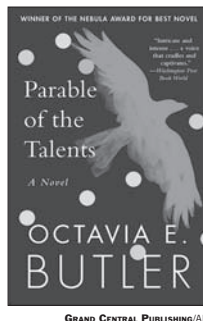
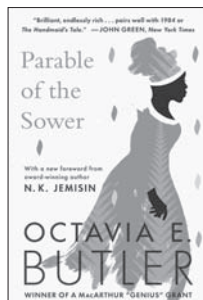
Butler's own life trained her to think in new ways. Born and raised in Pasadena, Calif., she was black, poor and stood 6 feet tall. "I believed I was ugly and stupid, clumsy, and socially hopeless," she once explained. Her feelings of isolation led her to the

reading, and writing, of science fiction and fantasy stories even as an aunt told her, "Honey ... Negroes can't be writers."

At a writers workshop in the 1970s, Harlan Ellison read her work and became an early supporter, publishing one of her stories in a science fiction anthology. Her first novel, "Patternmaster," came out in 1976, although it took her years to be able to support herself and for the industry to catch up to her. Jemisin and others remember that the original cover for "Dawn" featured a white woman, making Jemisin all the more surprised when she read the book and realized the protagonist was black.

Through the 1980s and '90s, her readership and reputation grew. She became the first science fiction author to receive a MacArthur "genius grant" and her literary honors included Nebula Awards for "Bloodchild" and "Parable of the Talents." She was shy and often reclusive and would describe herself as "A pessimist if I'm not careful, a feminist, a Black, a former Baptist, an oil-and-water combination of ambition, laziness, insecurity, certainty, and drive."

Some admirers have personal



memories of Butler. Not long before she died, in 2006, she was the keynote speaker at the Gwendolyn Brooks Conference on Black Literature and Creative Writing at Chicago State University. Okorafor was among hundreds in the audience. She had known Butler for years, dating back to a writers workshop where she first read Butler and sought her advice, beginning with a phone conversation.

"She was really kind and she was funny, and I just remember the conversation being really nurturing. She was very down to earth, but it was also like talking to someone who was way up there," Okorafor said. "At the Gwendolyn Brooks conference, I remember how surprised she was at the turnout. The room was packed, this big room with so much love. I just wish she were here now to see how much more she is being honored."

WEEKEND: HEALTH & FITNESS



How far is enough for social distancing to be effective?

By CATHERINE MARFIN
The Dallas Morning News

By now, we're familiar with the rule: Stay 6 feet away from other people for your best chance of preventing the spread of COVID-19.

Even as some states — and countries — begin to reopen more businesses, social distancing is still being emphasized. But some officials' guidelines for how much space to keep between yourself and others has varied.

The U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention has recommended at least a 6-foot gap. The World Health Organization has recommended half that distance — and only when people are coughing or sneezing.

However, other health experts have said even more space may be needed in some situations.

So how much social distancing is enough? Here's what you need to know:

Where does the 6-foot rule come from?

Health experts have said the recommendation for 6 feet of social distancing comes from studies of diseases in the 1930s and 1940s, mainly the work of William F. Wells, who studied tuberculosis.

COVID-19 is believed to be spread mainly through large respiratory droplets produced when people cough or sneeze. The droplets typically travel 3 to 6 feet.

Health experts say that because the droplets are larger and can usually be seen with the naked eye, gravity will cause them to fall to the ground within that distance.

Why are some concerned about the 6-foot rule?

There are questions about whether the virus can be transmitted through microscopic droplets, called aerosols, which linger in the air.

Health experts have pointed to studies and incidents that suggest there's a risk the virus can linger. One study in the New England Journal of Medicine suggested COVID-19 can live in the air as long as three hours

in the right conditions.

Experts also expressed concern about aerosol transmission after about 60 choir members gathered for a practice in Mount Vernon, Wash., and dozens of them contracted the virus.

A study published in the Journal of the American Medical Association in late March found that droplets that were produced when someone coughs or sneezes can travel up to 27 feet. The study wasn't conducted on the COVID-19 virus specifically, however, and droplets survive and fall at different rates depending on their size and factors such as temperature, humidity and air currents.

The study could have implications for the novel coronavirus, but there's still a lot that isn't known about the disease, such as how much of the virus survives in smaller particles and how much of a living virus it takes to make someone sick, health experts say. Even if the virus lingers in respiratory droplets in the air, health experts still can't say whether the droplets hold enough of the virus to cause concern.

"The question is not how far the germs can travel, but how far can they travel before they're no longer a threat," Dr. Paul Pottinger, an infectious disease professor at the University of Washington School of Medicine told USA TODAY. "The smaller the germ particles, the lower the risk that they might infect somebody who would breathe them in or get them stuck in their nose or their mouth."

What about social distancing when you exercise?

Because of the varying theories about aerosol transmission, questions have been raised about safe social distances outdoors.

Some experts say the risk of transmission outside is low because air flow dilutes any expelled air. Generally, health experts say you're safer engaging in outdoor activities than indoor ones, where air flow can be restricted, people are closer together and frequently touched items are abundant.

"Usually there's a lot more social distancing outside," Dr. Kevin Winthrop, a professor of infectious diseases in epidemiology

and public health at Oregon Health & Science University in Portland, told National Public Radio. "And environmental factors like wind and UV make it less likely you're going to come in contact with viral particles."

But one recent study found that when people walk briskly or run, their bodies create wakes of air that can carry respiratory droplets up to 15 feet.

The study hasn't been peer-reviewed or published, and it has significant limitations. For example, it didn't focus on the risk of infection or the COVID-19 virus specifically.

"The results look reasonable," Linsey Marr, a professor at Virginia Tech who studies air flow, told The New York Times. "Common sense and this study suggest that if someone is walking or running, we need to allow for more space around them."

Other health experts say allowing more space makes sense because people breathe heavier and harder when they're exercising.

"The mnemonic I like to use is double your distance," Dr. Ben Levine, a professor of medicine and cardiology at the University of Texas Southwestern Medical Center in Dallas, told NPR. "The greater volume and rate of breathing that occurs during exercise has the risk of spreading droplets farther. ... I think it's reasonable (to increase social distancing) based on the known changes in breathing during exercise."

So, is 6 feet enough?

Many health experts say 6 feet of distance is a good minimum to aim for, based on what is known about the virus' main method of transmission.

Health experts also recommend taking personal factors into account, such as how vulnerable an individual is and how well air is flowing.

"Everything is about probability," said Dr. Harvey Fineberg of the National Academies of Sciences, Engineering and Medicine. "Three feet is better than nothing. Six feet is better than 3 feet. At that point, the larger drops have pretty much fallen down. Maybe if you're out of spitting range, that could be even safer, but 6 feet is a pretty good number."

Bad breath? What to do now that you've found it

Wearing a face mask will keep you and others safer when you have to leave the house. That's the good news.

The bad news is that you now realize you suffer from halitosis. More than 80 million people suffer from chronic halitosis, or bad breath, according to Know Your Teeth.

Although bad breath can happen because of a medical infection, diabetes, kidney failure or a liver malfunction, the most common reason is poor oral hygiene. When food particles are left on your teeth or tongue, the bacteria cause odors in your mouth.

Here are five ways to combat bad breath and make wearing a mask a more pleasant experience:

Avoid certain foods

Onions and garlic add flavor to many foods but also add odors not easily brushed away.

"The substances that cause their bad smells make their way into your bloodstream and travel to your lungs, where you breathe them out," dentist Richard Price, a spokesman for the American Dental Association, told WebMD.

The best way to avoid the problem is to avoid the foods.

Stop smoking

Tobacco products adversely affect your health in ways other than causing cancer, like damaging your gums, staining your teeth and causing bad breath. Isolating might be a good time to break the smoking habit. Nicotine patches or gum can help, or make an appointment with a doctor, WebMD recommends.

Avoid dry mouth

"Saliva is the key ingredient in your mouth that helps keep the odor under control because it helps wash away food particles and bacteria," according to Know Your Teeth. If you aren't producing much saliva, try drinking water or chewing sugarless gum.

Brush and floss

WebMD recommends you brush your teeth at least twice a day and floss at least once a day to reduce plaque. The sticky buildup on your teeth collects bacteria that cause bad breath, and trapped food adds to the problem.

Don't overdo things, though, the experts warn. If you brush too hard you can wear down your teeth, making them vulnerable to decay.

Scrape/brush your tongue

Bacteria don't just live on your teeth. To rid your tongue of odor-causing bacteria, remember to brush it when you clean your teeth. If your toothbrush is too big to reach the back of your tongue, buy a scraper.

Scrapers are "designed specifically to apply even pressure across the surface of the tongue area. This removes bacteria, food debris and dead cells that brushing alone can't take care of," hygienist Pamela L. Quiñones, past president of the American Dental Hygienists' Association, told WebMD.

—Nancy Clanton
The Atlanta Journal-Constitution

Quentin Heyward, a flight attendant and purser at Delta Air Lines, left, and the Rev. Martini Shaw, right, an Episcopal priest at the Historic African Episcopal Church of St. Thomas, walk together, but apart, March 26 to maintain about a 6-foot distance at the Race Street Pier in Philadelphia. Heyward and Shaw are friends who worked out at the same gym prior to the coronavirus.

JESSICA GRIFFIN, THE PHILADELPHIA INQUIRER/TNS

WEEKEND: FAMILY

Raising grandkids

Seniors who currently are sole caregivers face unique stresses

By SAMANTHA MELAMED
The Philadelphia Inquirer

The Thursday morning meeting of Philly Families Connect was already wrapping up by the time Thelma Weeks finally got on the line, weariness in her voice.

Weeks, 71, of North Philadelphia, had spent three hours trying to print school assignments from her 9-year-old great-granddaughter's school-issued Chromebook — and it still wasn't working.

"It's very frustrating," Weeks said. "We're just walking in a dark tunnel, and we can't find our way out trying to help these kids. Being older, we don't know how to do this stuff."

The other grandparents in the group — which is run by the Supportive Older Women's Network, and normally meets at the 11th Street Health Center in North Philadelphia — knew the feeling well.

They're among more than 13,000 grandparents and great-grandparents in the city who are serving as primary caretakers for children, the Philadelphia Corporation for the Agencies estimates.

Like other parents muddling through the coronavirus pandemic, they are straining under the weight of 24-hour-a-day custody, care-taking and home-schooling.

The grandparents, though, are grappling with layers of additional challenges: There are technological anxieties (many don't have smartphones and have never had home internet) and literacy challenges. There are financial constraints (some were scraping by on Social Security, and now sinking under the cost of feeding kids who used to get free breakfast and lunch at school). And, there are physical limits, being tested by the daily exhaustion of entertaining young children and coaxing older ones to stay indoors.

Longing over it all is the worry of what will happen if any of them contracts COVID-19.

"My concern is, what backup plan can I have?" said Diane Lackey, 70, the sole caretaker for her 14-year-old grandson, Lawrence. She was the "backup plan" for her grandstep up? I don't see anybody trying to do that. When people hear someone has this virus, they're not trying to run toward them. They're trying to stay away."

For now, the grandparents have one another. A dozen women and one man, ages 58 to 88, clung to the phone line, most of them sole caretakers for grandkids and great-grandkids ranging from toddlers, to middle- and high-school students, to adults with intellectual disabilities.

The women discussed the newest social media in the front of an online shopping — how to know whether what they ordered is what will show up. They talked about how you can't send teenagers to the store, and expect them to know what things are supposed to cost.

Organizations that serve grandparents have been patching together



YONG KIM, THE PHILADELPHIA INQUIRER/THS

Thelma Weeks (center) with her great-granddaughters Khadija Weeks (left), 9, and Khadijah Weeks, 5, April 25 at their home.

he'd finally found a way to give his 5-year-old granddaughter space to work out her excess energy. "I moved all my furniture out of the way, put all the chairs in the dining room, and turned my whole house into a playground."

The women raising teenagers are struggling both to keep kids at home and to soothe their anxieties, as everything they'd been working toward feels as if it's slipping away. Prom dresses, custom ordered, still have to be paid for, but might never be worn. College plans now feel like fantasies.

And even though basketball courts are locked up and hoops removed, it's still nearly impossible to keep kids isolated. Some grandparents say having just one or two friends over is an allowance they have to make.

"That's their favorite words: Can I go? Can I go?" said Sandra Atwell, 72, whose granddaughter, Chaylah Jones, is 17 and a high-school junior. Chaylah is already questioning whether she'll get to walk at graduation, already recalibrating her ambitions from a state university to community college.

Lackey, who lives in Logan, saw her grandson, who has a learning disability, struggling in his class of 36 people. Now, she sees him lagging further behind, academically and socially, and she doesn't know how to help. When a box of sixth-grade math assignments arrived, both she and her grandson were mystified as to where to begin.

"This is very serious in that it's a continued gap in an education that was already full of gaps. How will that be addressed?"

Sometimes, Lawrence will put a mask on and say he's going out. All Lackey can do is explain the dangers and harp on him to wash his hands. "I don't think he quite understands, or he doesn't accept it."

Organizations that serve grandparents have been patching together

supports as best they can.

The nonprofit Grand Central has recruited about 10 families whose kids are in college to mentor the younger ones, tutoring online or just playing games to give their grandparents a break.

Chartan Nelson, who now runs an office solo, tried early on to move her biweekly support groups online, but hardly any of the grandparents were able to log in. Instead, she has been spending her days as a sort of remote help desk, connecting people with food deliveries, providing tech support, sitting on the line for hours during three-way calls with the grandparents and Comcast to try to get home internet installed.

One grandmother was told to set up her grandchild on Zoom for therapy. "So she called me to find out what Zoom is, or how to get Zoom," Nelson said.

After six weeks of work, about 90% of her families now have home internet. For the rest, "the next plan is to get the mobile hot spots. What I'm saying to those families is to continue to do the packets they got initially, even if it means doing them over and over again."

At the older women's network Thursday morning group, the grandparents are helping one another, at least with moral support. But it's hard not to worry: At least one member is already fighting off the virus, her coughing so violent she had to leave the call.

Arlene Segal, coordinator for Philly Families Connect, is trying to at least maintain the familiar routines. Back at the health center, she said, they would close by holding hands in a circle and reciting the Serenity Prayer.

"We would look to the person on our right, and say may you continue to be blessed. And we always have a rousing ending. We say, 'As grandparents, we are a force to be reckoned with!' and raise our arms in the air," Segal said. "It is quite wonderful."

THE MEAT AND POTATOES OF LIFE

Lisa Smith Molinari



Rooting for a pretty pastime

I've got dirt packed under my fingernails. There's a blister the size of Delaware on my thumb. My face is sunburned in a distinctive raccoon pattern around my sunglasses. I'm walking with a slight limp, thanks to the pain in my knee from too much squatting.

This happens to me every spring. As soon as winter gives up its death grip on the soil and the bees begin to buzz, I get the bug to plant things in my garden.

And now that we have been confined to our houses in coronavirus half-purgatory for months on end, we are all looking for something, for crinny's sake — to interrupt our ceaseless monotony. People everywhere are knitting, puzzling, bird-watching, cooking, ping-pong playing, Netflix bingeing, bread baking, book reading, sewing, sketching, instrument playing, yoga-ing and biking with newfound vigor. Hobbies have become so popular, good luck ordering your favorite board game online these days, and beware that you may not find flour at the grocery store this week.

Gardening has become a top coronavirus pastime, and supplies are flying off the shelves almost as fast as toilet paper and hand sanitizer. Last week, when the grocery store displayed flats of annuals outside the entrance, and the hardware store offered specials on grass seed, I found myself in a half-pant, heaping my cart with flowers, shrubs, vegetable seedlings and much. I even grabbed four bags of manure just because it was there. Needless to say, the drive home in my SUV was not exactly fragrant.

Back at home, I informed my husband, Francis, that we had pulled out the overgrown shrubs, weeds and swamp maples running along the back fence to make room for the new plants.

We found our shovels, which hadn't been used since last fall, and went to work. We thought we'd have the root ball of each shrub out with a few scoops of the spade, but of course, the overgrown plants wouldn't budge. One inch under the topsoil was a complex tangle of woody roots and random rocky deposits, the removal of which would have warranted the use of combat-grade explosives.

For an hour, we chomped, hacked, tugged and pulled, but still hadn't uprooted anything, despite speveng every expelative in the book. We guzzled water between breathless attempts as sweat soaked through our shirts. As if he were a middle-aged male version of Monica Seles, Francis grunted and groaned with every heave of the shovel. Finally, the last stubborn root broke free, and we triumphantly hurled a severed bush away.

One down, only nine more to go.

Needless to say, the day after we removed all four shrubs, two diseased rhododendrons and a few swamp maples, Francis and I could barely walk. It took me a week to recover enough energy to plant the items I'd purchased, and my knee still feels like it's going to buckle like some kind of hyperextended rubber Barbie doll leg. This week, I finally managed to get those new plants into the garden beds and pots. Although it doesn't exactly look like the re-creation of Epcot that I'd imagined, I satisfied my spring gardening fix.

I crave the release of digging in the dirt every spring. Pandemic or no pandemic, I long to revive my hibernating muscles with the rigors of yardwork. I smell the aroma of freshly mulched borders, see the hues of artistically arranged beds and taste the refreshment of a cold beer after a long day outdoors. I envision myself, in a flowered sundress and straw hat, walking through my abundant garden barefoot on a future hot midsummer day, placing my own freshly cut flowers, aromatic herbs and plump vegetables into a basket.

In reality, it never quite turns out that way.

"I'm always down with the tomatoes suffer from bottom rot and the azaleas have blight. Thankfully, my horticultural urgings are more about the therapeutic process than the end result. My blistered thumb might not be green, but this spring as I seek catharsis, our garden has already paid me back in spades.

Read more of Lisa Smith Molinari's columns at: themeatandpotatoesoflife.com
Email: meatandpotatoesoflife@googlemail.com

WEEKEND: CROSSWORD AND COMICS

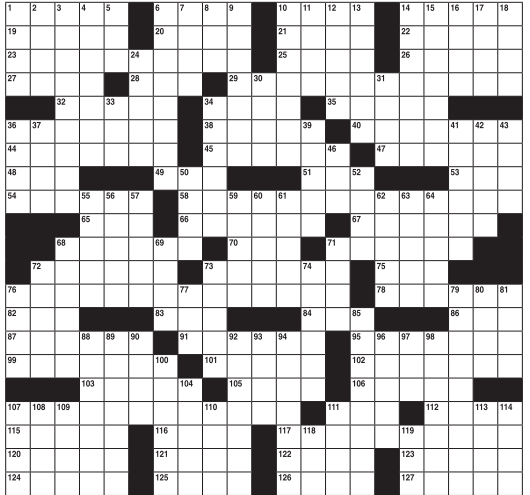
NEW YORK TIMES CROSSWORD

SHIFTING SOUNDS

BY BEN ZIMMER AND BRENDAN EMMETT QUIGLEY / EDITED BY WILL SHORTZ

Ben Zimmer is the language columnist for *The Wall Street Journal*, a contributing writer for *The Atlantic* and a former language columnist for *The New York Times*. Brendan Emmett Quigley is a professional crossword constructor. They met some 12 years ago when Brendan began contributing crosswords to the *Visual Thesaurus*, where Ben was the executive editor. The making of this puzzle — brainstorming the theme, filling the grid and writing the clues — was a full collaboration. Brendan has had many puzzles in *The Times*. This is Ben's debut. — W.S.

- ACROSS**
1 Smashing
6 Wide-eyed in wonder
10 Woeful output
14 Casual vodka order
19 Bubbling
20 Pricey
21 Alma mater of Grant and Lee; Abbr.
22 Board-game piece
23 Dog's order at a malt shop?
25 The "day" in "seize the day"
26 "Arrival" visitor
27 You can see right through it
28 Part of H.M.S.
29 "Game of Thrones" patriarch has difficulties?
32 Zora Neale Hurston's "Eyes Were Watching God"
34 Stand-up comic Kondabolu
35 Drum heard in raga music
36 Creator of Christopher Robin
38 Beat out by a hair
40 Big name in ratings
44 Male sailors
45 Words of affirmation
47 Upscale
48 Android alternative
49 ____ Mahal
51 Kind of diet
- 53 Chest muscle, informally
54 The "S" of 48-Across
58 Advised a chess player to attack the king?
65 Spanish unit of time with a tilde
66 Yoda, to Luke
67 Shows as an encore presentation
68 A fingerprint can leave one
70 Cell no., say
71 Strips of weapons
72 Coming from two speakers
73 Frequent choice for maid of honor
75 Deg. for an aspiring attorney abroad
76 Part of Disney's advertising budget?
78 How some pranks might go
82 Constellation with a palindromic name
83 Scat syllable for Sinatra
84 Hula loop
86 Academy Award winner for "Moonlight" and "Green Book"
87 Dr. Seuss character who becomes "King of the Mud"
91 Sushi condiment
95 Birds that can recognize themselves in mirrors
99 Beyond sad, or beyond happy
101 Some piercing spots
102 Categoricaly stated
- 103 Indubitably
105 Bellybutton fluff
106 Bordeaux wine region
107 Decisively defeat a cabinet department?
111 Musical knock
112 Share on social media
115 Like a zealous fan base
116 School attended by 20 prime ministers
117 Feeling one gets under anesthesia at the dentist?
120 Rat in "Ratatouille"
121 Word before or after run
122 Memo heading
123 Prize for a doc, maybe
124 Stick a fork in
125 Venue with a bell guard
126 Louthsome person
127 Indira Gandhi's father
- DOWN**
1 Comedian Mort
2 Instrument from the French for "high wood"
3 Bad shot by Dracula?
4 Affinity
5 Lacking originality
6 Follow
7 Prepare, with "up"
8 Symbol of sturdiness
9 ____ launcher
10 Close pals
11 "Yeah, right!"
12 Process, as ore
- 13 Language with only 14 native letters
14 He made his final cameo in "Avengers: Endgame"
15 Spilled one's soul
16 '30s migrant
17 Unwelcome loan
18 Places to exchange dollars for quarters
24 Stand out from the crowd
30 Little bits of energy
31 Competitor of eBay
33 Tree that lines the Central Park Mall
34 Debut single for both Jimi Hendrix and Patti Smith
35 Flaws and all
37 Shout for 44-Across
39 Put off for another day
41 Building caretakers
42 Higher-ups in a hierarchy
43 Part of a guitar
46 One on the road in "On the Road"
50 Maker of Instant Feathers and Hi-Speed Tonic
52 Laura of "Marriage Story"
55 Does some broombusting, e.g.
56 Acousticon (to)
59 Loosen, in a way
60 Banned display of firepower, informally
61 Conductor George with 31 Grammys
62 Passed out in Vegas
- 63 Gambino crime family patriarch
64 Attractive but vacuous guy, in slang
68 Mary, Queen of Scots, e.g.
69 Prod
71 Prod
72 Philosopher Kierkegaard
73 "Sabah" cousin
74 Head an army poster
76 "Will you allow me to demonstrate?"
- 77 Plane-ticket info
79 Comfy seating at a carnival?
80 Downwind, at sea
81 New England art inst.
85 "Mind. Blown."
88 Shot served with salt and lime
89 Clean
90 Lexicographer Partridge
92 Singer Knowles with a 2016 No. 1 album
93 Ever so slightly
- 94 Perk from work
96 Tex who animated Bugs Bunny
97 Diploma equivalent, in brief
98 Make an engaging offer?
100 British spy Christopher in 2016 news
104 Legally probable
107 Parisian equivalent to "molto" or "muy"
108 Increase, with "up"
- 109 Stage prize since 1956
110 It distinguishes meaning in many East Asian languages
111 Fitch of Abercrombie & Fitch
113 Red carpet interviewee
114 Traffic-sign word
118 Card-game call
119 Sun follower?

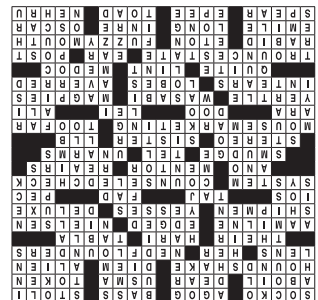


GUNSTON STREET



"Gunston Street" is drawn by Basil Zaviski. Email him at gunstonstreet@yahoo.com, and online at gunstonstreet.com.

RESULTS FOR ABOVE PUZZLE



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FACES

Messages of hope

'Ghostbusters' actor Ernie Hudson reaching out to housebound fans

By ROHAN PRESTON
Star Tribune (Minneapolis)

Sequestered in Minneapolis after Hollywood shut down, charismatic actor Ernie Hudson sometimes dons his old "Ghostbusters" jumpsuit and records messages to cheer up fans. Or he may sing happy birthday to a kid striking with cancer.

Hudson is doing his part to bring light and joy to the populace during the pandemic.

"I'm thankful that we're OK, but I really feel for people and what they're going through," Hudson said. "If you do get the virus, are you going to be hit with a crazy bill? And if you're already in financial crisis, is the bill still going up? It's a rough time with everybody getting cabin fever or worrying about money."

Hudson decamped from the West Coast in March just as California was about to shut down. He had been working on two shows that were brought to a halt — Carl Weber's "The Family Business," a crime family series that started on BET and is now on its streaming service, and "L.A.'s Finest," the "Bad Boys" spinoff headlined by Gabrielle Union and Jessica Alba.

Just before jetting to Minnesota, Hudson, 74, had a close call with the novel coronavirus.

A cast member on "The Family Business" tested positive for COVID-19 in the waning days of shooting. Hudson had close contact with the actor.

"The last scene we shot was a shootout where the guy jumps out, gets shot and the



AARON LAVINSKY, MINNEAPOLIS STAR TRIBUNE/TNS

"Ghostbusters" costar Ernie Hudson — and Slim — record an uplifting video message for a fan through the Cameo app. He creates about a dozen messages a week.

wife cradles him," Hudson said. "I go pick him up and put him in the car. Well, that (actor) ends up with coronavirus. Totally freaked me out. He's recovered now, but I had to check myself for weeks."

At first, Hudson welcomed the breather that the shutdown provided.

"Usually, necessity drives you, and you're just running, running," he said. "All those gotta-go, gotta-do things are on hold."

Then he wanted to get ambitious — to do something big to remember the pandemic by.

"People are always talking about all the things they would do if they had more time," he said. "Well, for me, that excuse doesn't carry water anymore. I have more time, and I'm just at the place now where I'm kind of tired of it. I'm just trying to get myself downstairs to work out."

Still, he's savoring the days that he has with family, including nightly dinners. "We don't have TV or anything on," Hudson said.

The messages that Hudson records for fans are through the Cameo app, where celebrities do such gestures for a nominal fee. Actor Marla Maples is on it for \$72 a pop. Debra Messing of "Will and Grace" fame will set you back \$300.

It costs \$135 for a message from Hudson, with or without his Winston Zeddemore ghost-busting jumpsuit.

"Generally, it's people celebrating anniversaries, welcoming new babies and things like that," said Hudson, who records about a dozen messages a week.

"You can do it from your home on the phone — it doesn't take a lot of time and it feels very connected and positive," he said. "If someone picks me out, it's personal. They're a fan of something I've done."

The release date for "Ghostbusters: Afterlife," where Hudson reunites with costars Bill Murray and Dan Aykroyd, has been pushed back from July to March 2021.

Common pushes for jail releases

From wire reports

Rapper and activist Common went into quarantine concerned about incarcerated people he has met during visits to jails, prisons and juvenile detention centers around the U.S. and who aren't able to maintain social distance or adopt rigorous hygiene routines to prevent the spread of COVID-19.

"It's a troubling time for them," Common said, "because they are the people who usually are overlooked."

On Wednesday, his criminal justice reform organization Imagine Justice launched a campaign with dozens of advocacy and activist groups calling attention to the threat that the coronavirus pandemic poses on millions of men, women and youths who are incarcerated in the U.S.

The campaign, dubbed #WeMatterToo, is urging authorities to immediately release people who have served the vast majority of their sentences, especially if they have underlying health conditions that put them at greater risk of severe illness or death from COVID-19. Although state and local correctional institutions have already released thousands of people from confinement due to the pandemic, supporters of the campaign also want governments to pay for testing and housing for inmates after they are released.

Common said he also hopes to create greater public awareness about what happens inside the nation's jails and prisons and the impact that has on society.

Concert stream will reunite cast of 'Smash'

The cast of "Bombshell," the fictional Broadway musical about Marilyn Monroe, is coming together again to aid those confronting the coronavirus.

Katharine McPhee, Debra Messing, Megan Hilty and others will reunite May 20 to present a stream of the one-night-only 2015 Broadway concert of the musical within the TV show "Smash." It will be seen on People.com, PeopleTV and the magazine's Facebook page and Twitter.

The evening will be introduced by two-time Academy Award winner Renee Zellweger and will involve memories, stories and comments from the original cast.

The reuniting — and self-isolating — cast also includes Christian Borle, Jaime Cepero, Will Chase, Brian d'Arcy James, Jack Davenport, Ann Harada, Jeremy Jordan, Andy Mientus, Leslie Odom Jr., Krysta Rodriguez and Wesley Taylor.

Other news

■ On Wednesday, Disney announced that "The New Mutants," director Josh Boone's horror installment within Fox's "X-Men" franchise, will be hitting theaters Aug. 28. The film was previously slated to open in April, but was postponed along with a number of other upcoming Disney films because of the coronavirus outbreak.

'Quaranchella' lets locked-down neighbors loosen up

By ANDREW DALTON
Associated Press

For 15 years, Adam Chester has subbed for Elton John, performing John's parts in rehearsals with the rocker's band. But with John sitting out the pandemic, Chester had to find another gig.

And he did: weekly, socially distant concerts in his suburban Los Angeles cul-de-sac.

Which is how Chester has come to serenade a few dozen of his face-masked neighbors from inside a broad rectangle of rainbow chalk with "Social distance" and a heart written at its edge. They dance to John's "Crocodile Rock" and sing along to the Beatles' "Hey Jude."

They call this "Quaranchella," and it has become a source of community and connection at a time when they're sorely lacking.

"It's been an incredible experience," said Chester's wife, Maria, who serves as his road crew along with their two teenage sons. "It kind of organically happened because he needed to play, and it's been evolving."

Chester jokes about his role as John's substitute — "He's Sir Elton and I'm 'Sur' Elton, with a 'u,' the surrogate Elton John" — but his career has not been spent entirely in the superstar's shadow.

He played a major role in the 2018 Grammy salute to Elton John at New York's Madison Square Garden. And he also played his own club and party gigs, but the lockdown put a halt to that.

"I was going out of my mind inside the house here as a lot of musicians are," Chester said. "I thought, 'Why don't we take this outside once a week?'"

Chester said "there wasn't a dry eye on the block" one recent evening when he played Simon & Garfunkel's "The Boxer," the favorite song of one neighbor's dying father.

The response from neighbors has been overwhelmingly positive.



PHOTOS BY CHRIS PIZZELLO/AP

Musician Adam Chester performs his weekly neighborhood concert in Sherman Oaks, Calif., for his neighbors.

"All week I look forward to that Saturday show," said neighbor Lisa Silver, who along with others pitched in to buy a tripod to hold Chester's phone so the shows can be streamed on Facebook.

Exhilarated after the concert, Chester said these Saturday night shows may outlast the quarantine era.

"I can't imagine going back to anything normal after this," he said.

AMERICAN ROUNDUP

Police stun suspect in firing of officer's gun

MD BALTIMORE — Baltimore police stunned a suspect accused of grabbing and firing an officer's gun Monday, the department said. Officers responding to a disorderly conduct call in North Baltimore encountered the suspect, The Baltimore Sun reported, citing police. An officer and the suspect began to struggle, and the suspect grabbed the officer's department-issued weapon and fired off a single round, police said. The suspect was then stunned and taken into custody.

A department spokeswoman did not identify the suspect or say whether they were charged, the newspaper said.

9-year-old boy catches 80-pound sturgeon

TN HENDERSONVILLE — A 9-year-old boy in Tennessee became the third child in his family to catch a monster fish, reeling in an 80-pound sturgeon that outweighed him by far.

Coye Price was eager to catch something big after his 11-year-old sister Caitlin hooked a 40-pound striper and his 8-year-old sister Farrah reeled in a 58-pound blue catfish a while back, the Tennessee Wildlife and Resource Agency said Tuesday in a Facebook post.

Coye, who weighs just 55 pounds, was targeting catfish in Old Hickory Lake before he hooked the sturgeon. It took him 15 minutes to get the fish in the boat, where they weighed it and took some pictures before returning it to the water, the Tennessee reported.

Woman injures self in closed national park

WY MAMMOTH HOT SPRINGS — A woman illegally visited Yellowstone National Park while it's closed during the coronavirus pandemic and suffered burns Tuesday when she fell into a thermal feature, officials said.

She was reportedly backing up while taking photos and fell into a hot spring or hole where hot gases emerge near Old Faithful geyser, park spokeswoman Linda Veress said in an email.

Despite her injuries, the woman drove for roughly 50 miles until park rangers stopped her near Mammoth Hot Springs. She was flown to a hospital in Idaho Falls, Idaho.

Park officials do not release the woman's name or the extent of her injuries.

Judge to be sentenced to jail for 2nd DUI

CO DENVER — A Colorado judge is expected to be sentenced to a jail term for pleading guilty to a second DUI charge within two years.

Debra Gunkel, 62, pleaded guilty to violating the terms of her probation from a 2018 DUI case in Prowers County, KCNC-TV reported Monday.



DAVID ZALUBOWSKI/AP

On edge during the pandemic

A skateboarder completes a jump in an open skate park during the coronavirus pandemic in Castle Rock, Colo., on Tuesday.

The conviction would have been erased from the Baca County judge's record if she completed two years of probation, but Gunkel was arrested for driving while drunk in Kansas in August. Gunkel's probation was revoked after the charge was filed.

Jail time will be mandatory after her expected plea in June to the Kansas DUI charge.

Injured manatee gives birth at SeaWorld

FL ORLANDO — An injured pregnant manatee was rescued by crews from a Tampa Bay area marine laboratory and taken to SeaWorld in Orlando for treatment, officials said in a news release.

The manatee gave birth to a calf Tuesday at SeaWorld, the statement said.

Jess Blackburn, a stranding biologist at Mote Marine Laboratory & Aquarium, and Sarasota police marine patrol officer Michael Skinner responded to calls about a distressed manatee on Saturday in Siesta Key. She noticed the manatee was listing to one side and had both healed and fresh boat strike wounds, Blackburn said in the news release.

"Those kinds of wounds likely caused air to be trapped in the manatee's chest cavity, making it difficult for the animal to submerge efficiently," she said. Crews from the Florida Fish

THE CENSUS

343

The number of acres that burned in a wildfire Florida officials say was caused by a man who set up an illegal burn barrel on his property. Allen Smith, 58, was arrested Tuesday and charged with misdemeanor counts of reckless burning of lands, violating open burning requirements and burning of illegal materials, the Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services said in a news release. Smith had been burning prohibited materials in a barrel behind his Santa Rosa Beach home on May 5 and didn't fully extinguish the illegal fire before leaving it unattended, investigators said. The remaining hot materials escaped into the surrounding dry vegetation and caused it to ignite and damage or destroy about 59 homes, officials said.

and Wildlife Conservation Commission, Mote, Sarasota police and the Sarasota County Sheriff's Office assisted in getting the manatee into a boat, which took it to shore, where a transport truck took it to SeaWorld.

US attorney: Man sold cocaine, left it on deck

NH CONCORD — A man pleaded guilty in New Hampshire federal court to distributing cocaine, once leaving the drug for pickup on his back deck, the U.S. attorney's office said.

According to court documents, Michael Baez, 39, of Pelham, sold cocaine to a cooperating individual on a number of occasions last year. Baez sold over 420 grams of cocaine, the documents said.

Baez is scheduled to be sentenced on Aug. 19. "Time after time, Michael Baez

pushed thousands of dollars' worth of cocaine from his home, where he once left the dangerous narcotic out on his grill, on his back deck, ready for pickup," said Joseph Bonavolonta, special agent in charge of the FBI Boston Division.

Fugitive who escaped restraints is caught

RI PROVIDENCE — A Rhode Island man who freed himself from restraints and escaped police custody in January has been caught in Puerto Rico, federal authorities say.

David Marroquin was arrested Monday by U.S. Marshals after a brief foot chase, the Marshals Service said in a statement.

Marroquin, 20, of Providence, was arrested on a breaking and entering charge on Jan. 18, but escaped from custody. Authorities developed information that

he had fled to Puerto Rico.

Marroquin is being held pending extradition to Rhode Island to face several charges, including committing a crime of violence while in possession of a weapon, breaking and entering, conspiracy and escape.

Marroquin also had two outstanding bench warrants issued in January out of Rhode Island Superior Court for failing to appear for a bail violation hearing.

Regulators might cut US catch of bluefish

MA BOSTON — Federal regulators are considering reducing the East Coast's harvest of bluefish to prevent overfishing.

Bluefish are popular gamefish that are also harvested commercially for food. The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration said the catch of the fish would be reduced by 25%, to about 2.8 million pounds, under the current plan.

The recreational harvest would be cut by nearly 40% to a little less than 9.5 million pounds. The federal bluefish recreational daily bag limit would also be reduced.

Fishermen seek bluefish from Maine to Florida, with North Carolina accounting for the largest share of the harvest in 2018.

From wire reports

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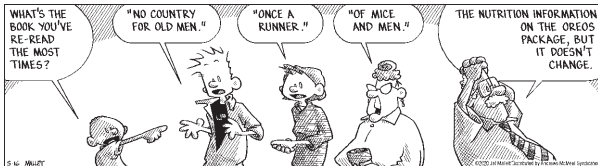
Sliced and
Today

Cryptoequin Clue

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Today's Cryptokuin Clue: G equals Y

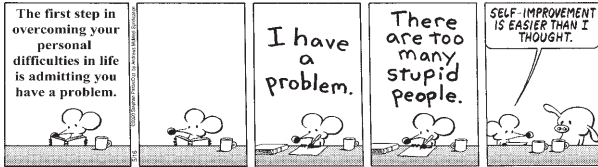
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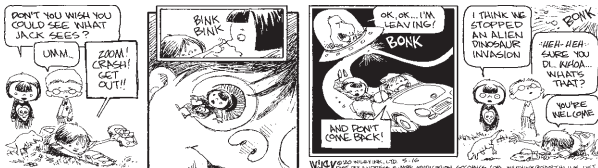
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Pearls Before Swine



Non Sequitur



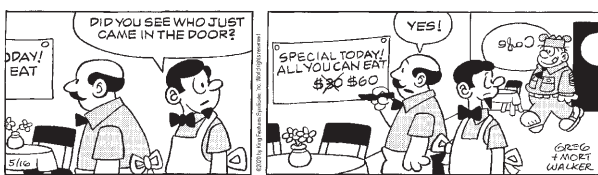
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Carpe Diem



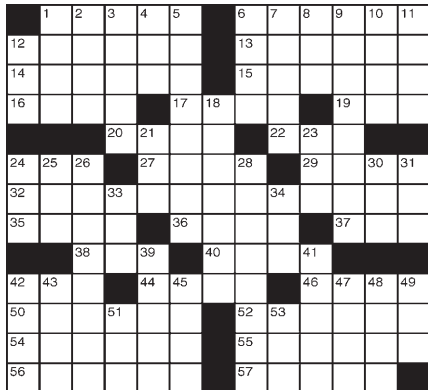
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Bizarro



Eugene Sheffer Crossword



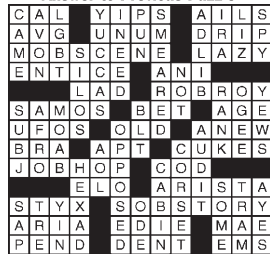
ACROSS

- 1 Picture puzzle
- 6 Red wine
- 12 Film on metal
- 13 Have a cocktail (or two)
- 14 Novelist Allende
- 15 Spool, as one's parade
- 16 Towering
- 17 Morales of "Jericho"
- 19 Barbie's companion
- 20 Otherwise
- 22 Caustic solution
- 24 Cave flier
- 27 Sea predator
- 29 Author Ferber
- 32 Fruit-filled desserts
- 35 — good example
- 36 Father (Fr.)
- 37 "Unh-unh"
- 38 Hockey's Bobby
- 40 "Toodle-oo!"
- 42 Mess up
- 44 Org.
- 46 Mark Harmon TV series
- 50 Winning gestures
- 52 Swiss metropolises
- 54 Online icon
- 55 Chopin pieces
- 56 Divides
- 57 Tennis star Monica

DOWN

- 1 Tabula —
- 2 And others (Lat.)
- 3 Sacred
- 4 French article
- 5 Worker on commission
- 6 Actress Sorvino
- 7 Cybermessage
- 8 Slugger's stat
- 9 Online networking website
- 10 Bassoon's kin
- 11 Nashville's state
- 12 Trench
- 14 Classified data
- 21 High tennis shot
- 23 "Uh-huh"
- 24 Small ammo
- 25 Pub pint
- 26 Learning aid
- 28 Puts in order
- 30 Museum-funding org.
- 31 Fire sign?
- 33 Corn spike
- 34 Still
- 39 Rushed toward
- 41 Make invalid
- 42 Peron and Longoria
- 43 Answer an invite
- 45 Former polit. divisions
- 47 Yield
- 48 Currier's partner
- 49 Airline to Sweden
- 51 Volkswagen model
- 53 Paris summer

Answer to Previous Puzzle



5-16

CRYPTOQUIP

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PUWSA, Y NVYIT NVKR ZWUHH

UDKW NU NVK UNNKW HYAK.
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EDITORIAL

Terry Leonard, Editor
leonard.terry@stars.com
Robert H. Reid, Senior Managing Editor
reid.robert@stars.com
Tina Croley, Managing Editor for Content
croley.tina@stars.com
Sean Moores, Managing Editor for Presentation
moores.sean@stars.com
Joe Gromelski, Managing Editor for Digital
gromelski.joe@stars.com

BUREAU STAFF

Europe/Mideast

Erin Slavin, Europe & Mideast Bureau Chief
slavin.erin@stars.com
+1-202-886-3033
+1-202-886-3615/5350, DSN (314)583.9350

Pacific

Aaron Kidd, Pacific Bureau Chief
kidd.aaron@stars.com
+81-42.552.2511 ext. 88380, DSN (315)227.7380

Washington

Joseph Caccioli, Washington Bureau Chief
caccioli.joseph@stars.com
(+1)202-886-0033
Brian Bowers, Assistant Managing Editor, News
bowers.brian@stars.com

CIRCULATION

Mideast

Robert Reismann, Mideast Circulation Manager
rob.reismann.na@gmail.com
xscirculation@stars.com
DSN (314)583-9111

Europe

Karen Lewis, Community Engagement Manager
lewis.karen@stars.com
miller.caroline@stars.com
+49(0)631.3615.9090, DSN (314)583.9090

Pacific

Mari Mori, customerhelp@stars.com
+81-3 6385.3171; DSN (315)227.7333

CONTACT US

Washington

tel: (+1)202.886.0003
633 3rd St. NW, Suite 116, Washington, DC 20001-2050

Reader letters

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OPINION

Forced quarantines are not the American way

By TYLER COWEN

Bloomberg Opinion

There has been surprisingly little debate in America about one strategy often cited as crucial for preventing and controlling the spread of COVID-19: coercive isolation and quarantine, even for mild cases. China, Singapore and South Korea separate people from their families if they test positive, typically sending them to dorms, makeshift hospitals or hotels. Vietnam and Hong Kong have gone further, sometimes isolating the close contacts of patients.

I am here to tell you that those practices are wrong, at least for the U.S. They are a form of detainment without due process, contrary to the spirit of the Constitution and, more important, to American notions of individual rights. Yes, those who test positive should have greater options for self-isolation than they currently do. But if a family wishes to stick together and care for each other, it is not the province of the government to tell them otherwise.

It is true that such practices very likely save lives, sometimes many lives. A recent working paper from three economists noted that "a policy that uses tests to quarantine infected people has very large social benefits." One reason the pandemic has been so deadly in Italy, for example, is the high rate of family transmission in the northern part of the country.

So it is possible that tens or hundreds of thousands of American lives could be saved by the forced removal of people from their homes. Still, it would not be the right thing to do.

Consider the scale and scope of the coercion that could be required. The situation could suddenly improve, but a common es-

timate is that 40% to 60% of the American public might end up infected. It is an open question how many of those cases the authorities will catch, or if the virus could be shut down altogether. Nevertheless, at least 150 million Americans could be subject to a forced-quarantine regime.

And since family members may wish to care for the sick, any coerced quarantine of a single person will very often be a depredation against more than just that person. Given America's dismal record with nursing-home fatalities, does anyone really expect that quarantine dormitories or temporary hospital facilities will be such great places for caregiving? Forcible quarantines might save many lives in the future — but only by imposing a de facto death sentence on some people now.

Furthermore, all tests have false positives, not just medically but administratively (who else has experienced the government making mistakes on your tax returns?). Fortunately, current COVID-19 tests do not have a high rate of false positives. But even a 1% net false positive rate would mean — in a world where all Americans get tested — that more than 1 million innocent, non-sick Americans are forcibly detained and exposed to further COVID-19 risk.

Who exactly do these people get to return to their families? No one currently knows exactly how long the risk of contagion lasts.

And it's not just the violation of individual rights. A policy of forcible detainment would put Americans at each other's throats. It would reinforce the view that all Americans should own guns and be ready to use them. The very fear of such forthcoming detainments would compound polarization, encourage belief in pseudo-

science and all but guarantee that millions of Americans will avoid COVID-19 testing altogether.

Coercive containment was tried during one recent pandemic — in Castro's Cuba, from 1986 to 1994, for those with HIV/AIDS. It is not generally a policy that is endorsed in polite society, and not because everyone is such an expert on Cuban public health data and epidemiological calculations. People oppose the policy because it was morally wrong.

And what about uncertainty? Is it really a safe bet that America's quarantine policy would be executed successfully and save many lives? What if scientists are on the verge of discovering a cure or treatment that will lower the COVID-19 death rate significantly? Individual rights also protect society from the possibly disastrous consequences of its own ignorance.

It is a commonplace observation that a policy of forced quarantine is not culturally suited for an individualistic society such as the U.S. That is a point worth making, but I am struck by the cowardice implicit in this perspective. Who among us will speak up for individual rights? And why do we find it necessary to tiptoe around this topic? Much as I disagree, I'm actually more impressed by those willing to take a stand in favor of a policy of coerced quarantine.

In the meantime, in judging pandemic policies, there are more considerations than just lives saved and effect on GDP. The most important is a strong and defensible notion of right and wrong.

Bloomberg Opinion columnist Tyler Cowen is a professor of economics at George Mason University. This column does not necessarily reflect the views of the editorial board of Bloomberg LP and its owners.

Our virus strategy properly called harm reduction

By LEANA S. WEN

Special to The Washington Post

Anthony Fauci, the nation's top infectious-disease expert, has warned of "endless suffering and death" if reopening occurs prematurely. No state has met the White House's own reopening criteria, yet more than 40 of them have loosened or are loosening social distancing restrictions. So here's the question I would have asked the witnesses at Tuesday's Senate coronavirus hearing: Have we formally retreated from a goal of containing COVID-19 to one of harm reduction?

At the beginning of the outbreak, the United States had a chance to contain the virus by identifying each person bringing the infection into the country and stopping it before it spread in the community.

We failed, with a lack of testing largely to blame. Instead of individual-level containment, which would have had minimal effect on the economy, we had to employ so-called city-level lockdowns to slow the explosive spread of the virus and buy us time until we developed the capacity to rein it in. The idea was that restrictions would be lifted once we reduced the number of infections far enough and built up the public health infrastructure needed to find new positive cases, trace contacts and quarantine those exposed.

Unfortunately, due to a late start, inconsistent state actions and a lack of federal direction, most states have yet to see a consistent decline in cases, much less reduced them to low enough levels for this to work. No state has achieved sufficient testing and contact tracing. Reopening under these circumstances means we are giving up on

containing COVID-19, the disease caused by the coronavirus.

What's next, then? The administration has yet to use these words, but it appears that we're adopting a strategy that I recognize from other aspects of public health: harm reduction.

Harm reduction was initially developed as a public health approach to reduce the negative consequences of drug use. It recognizes that while stopping drug use is the desired outcome, many people won't be able to do that. For those individuals, needle-exchange programs can reduce their risk of acquiring HIV and hepatitis and transmitting these infections to others. Such programs do not promote or condone drug use, as some critics contend. Rather, they face the reality that if a behavior with harmful consequences is going to happen regardless, steps should be taken to reduce the risk for individuals and others around them. Think, too, of safe-sex campaigns, or motorcycle helmet laws.

And this seems to me where we are with COVID-19: We're no longer trying to eliminate the virus. Instead, we are accepting that Americans will have to live with it.

If that's the case, then our efforts should pivot from justifying why reopening is a good idea to figuring out how best to reduce the harm it is going to cause. If employees have to go to work, let's at least come up with evidence-based practices that help them do so more safely. Should workplaces all get regular deep cleaning, close off any communal areas and meet new standards for ventilation? Can employees be mandated to wear masks, work six feet apart and keep a contact diary?

We know that COVID-19 is most likely to be transmitted when a lot of people are

in an enclosed area for a prolonged period. I would not have advised that hair salons and gyms open for business, but since they have in some states, we should aim to stop the highest-risk practices — prolonged treatments and crowded indoor fitness classes, for example. If people are going to get together in large groups despite the danger, we should at least advise that they go outdoors, for shorter periods of time, and avoid practices with a higher likelihood of disease transmission, like sharing utensils and group contact sports.

A switch to harm reduction doesn't mean the Trump administration is off the hook on testing and tracing. Regular, rapid testing will make it much safer for employees to return to work and back to school. Of course, there is also a fundamental difference between this new iteration of societal harm reduction and what I know as the standard public health practice of individual harm reduction — this disease risk is being forced upon the many Americans who would not have chosen it for themselves and their loved ones. That's a real tragedy.

I wish the United States had taken a different path. We could have contained the virus earlier, and we still had a chance to do it until we reopened against the guidance of public health experts — including the Trump administration's own top doctors. But now that we are where we are, we should at least be honest and call our new strategy what it is. It's our best hope left for saving lives.

Leana S. Wen is an emergency physician and visiting professor at George Washington University Milken Institute School of Public Health. Previously, she served as Baltimore's health commissioner and member of Planned Parenthood.

OPINION

What newspapers are saying at home

The following editorial excerpts are selected from a cross section of newspapers throughout the United States. The editorials are provided by The Associated Press and other statewide syndicates.

For everyone's safety, Musk must get his ducks in a row
Los Angeles

Elon Musk is a billionaire who will, on occasion, tweet ridiculous things, act impulsively, display a prodigious ego and act as if the law doesn't apply to him. And now he's throwing a tantrum that threatens the state's ability to move safely and smartly out of its current lockdown.

It would be a shame to just ignore Musk as he broadcasts his sometimes trenchant, sometimes bizarre musings to 34 million Twitter followers. ("I am selling almost all physical possessions. Will own no house.") But he's also the leader of Tesla and SpaceX, which employ thousands of people.

On Monday, Musk defied Alameda County health department orders and reopened Tesla's electric car manufacturing plant in Fremont, tweeting Monday afternoon, "I will be on the line with everyone else. If anyone is arrested, I ask that it only be for persisting in the plan. I mean, Nissan had given 'essential' businesses permission to reopen, the company said on its website Saturday that it would restart the Fremont factory in keeping with a plan developed in consultation with county officials and modeled after their "smooth and orderly operations." Sheesh.

The problem is that Alameda County hasn't signed off on that plan. Instead, county health officials have said they'd like Tesla to hold off for a few days until they see results from the county's first steps to ease its shelter-in-place order. That delay seems reasonable, given how volatile the pandemic has been. Nevertheless, it's just too much for Musk; on Saturday, he tweeted that he was "moving Tesla's headquarters and future programs" to Texas or Nevada "immediately," and the company sued the county for allegedly violating its constitutional rights to due process and equal protection under the law.

We get it, it's hard out here for an entrepreneur! And for everybody else. Unemployment is skyrocketing and the economy is in free-fall, largely because of the restrictions that were designed to prevent COVID-19 from overwhelming the health care system.

But getting back to the pre-coronavirus status quo won't be easy, given the risk that the pandemic will flare up again and force more lockdowns. That's why the decisions on which businesses and activities resume when need to be made by people who are accountable to the public, not by private CEOs who threaten to pull up stakes when they don't get their way. Or any business owners who, like Musk, consider themselves better judges of the public good than the government.

Newson's May 4 executive order explicitly gives local governments the authority to adopt more restrictive COVID-19 measures than the state's orders where necessary. Alameda County's steps need to be reasonable, and it needs to get businesses open as soon as it is safe to do so. But that's the county's call to make, not Musk's.

Posturing is not productive while the economy sinks
The Washington Post

For anyone still counting on a swift and sharp "V-shaped" economic recovery, Federal Reserve Chairman Jerome Powell had some sobering news Wednesday. The damage done so far to the economy is the worst



BEN MARCOT/AP

The Tesla plant in Fremont, Calif., has cars in the parking lot Tuesday, CEO Elon Musk reopened the plant Monday despite not having approval from Alameda County.

since World War II, with 40% of households making \$40,000 or less having lost a job in March. And, Powell said, the "path ahead is both highly uncertain and subject to significant downside risks." More help from Congress may well be needed on top of the trillions already provided: "Additional fiscal support could be costly but worth it if it helps avoid long-term economic damage and leaves us with a stronger recovery," Powell said.

That's correct. Unfortunately, Powell spoke as Congress has begun to divide along partisan lines about how much more to spend, when and for what purposes. House Speaker Nancy Pelosi, D-Calif., has unveiled a \$3 trillion measure, key provisions of which are \$395 billion in cash for state, local, tribal and territorial governments and another round of direct payments to households potentially larger than the first, which cost an estimated \$290 billion. The bill also includes \$3.6 billion to meet a crucial non-economic need: helping as many voters as possible participate securely in the November elections.

The huge measure has no chance of passing the Republican Senate and is therefore part political statement, part opening bid in inevitable negotiations with the GOP. Republicans are balking, both because they insist on their own policy priorities, such as lawsuit protection for reopening businesses, and because they believe there's "no rush" (President Donald Trump's phrase) to tee up more spending before the money already approved has had a chance to work. Indeed, only about \$1.4 trillion of Congress's total \$3.6 trillion in COVID-19 related spending and tax relief had actually hit the economy as of May 8, according to the Committee for a Responsible Federal Budget. (Notably, Powell has yet to activate a \$600 billion business lending program backed by capital Congress gave to the Treasury Department.) It's also true that states have received significant federal help already and that the next installment must be based on carefully assessed needs — especially given the inevitable difficulties of asking taxpayers everywhere to help states, sometimes wealthy ones, where they don't live.

Nevertheless, even many Republican senators admit, red and blue state and local governments alike have taken a revenue hit and need aid, as will households — especially low-income ones — small businesses and health care. Pelosi's bill is expensive, and studded with pet Democratic policies like the "paycheck protection" and local tax deduction for federal income taxpayers. But it actually omitted much of the wish list of the House's most progressive members, a bit of restraint Republicans could choose to see as a sign of Pelosi's willingness to be pragmatic, as she has in previous talks. Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell's, R-Ky., initial

reaction was to denounce the House bill and double down on his demand for lawsuit protection. Republicans should start talking in earnest, sooner rather than later. The country's needs are too urgent to withstand more partisan posturing.

Obama's comments on Flynn case self-serving, not accurate
The Wall Street Journal

Barack Obama is a lawyer, so it was stunning to read that he ventured into the Michael Flynn case in a way that misstated the supposed crime and ignored the history of his own administration in targeting Flynn. Since the former president chose to offer legal advice when he didn't meet, we wonder what he's really worried about.

"There is no precedent that anybody can find for someone who has been charged with perjury just getting off scot-free," Obama said in the May 8 call to about 3,000 members of the Obama Alumni Association. The comments were leaked to Yahoo News and confirmed by Obama's spokeswoman to The Washington Post and other outlets. Obama added: "That's the kind of stuff where you begin to get worried that basic — not just institutional norms — but our basic understanding of rule of law is at risk. And when you start moving in those directions, it can accelerate pretty quickly as we've seen in other places."

Even discounting for Obama's partisan audience, this gets the case willfully wrong. Flynn was never charged with perjury, which is lying under oath in a legal proceeding. Flynn pleaded guilty to a single count of lying to the FBI in our nation's White House on Jan. 24, 2017, that he was led to believe was a friendly chat among colleagues.

As for "scot-free," that better applies to former President Bill Clinton, who lied under oath in a civil case and was impeached for perjury but was acquitted by the Senate. We understand why Obama wouldn't bring that up.

We doubt Obama has even read the Justice Department motion to drop the Flynn prosecution. If he does ever read it, he'll find disconcerting facts that certainly do raise doubts about the FBI and our basic understanding of rule of law is at risk," though not for the reasons he claims.

Start with prosecutorial violation of the Brady rule, which Obama knows is a legal obligation that the prosecution must turn over potentially exculpatory evidence to the defense. Yet the FBI and its special counsel Robert Mueller didn't disclose that the interviewing FBI agents at the time didn't think that Flynn had lied about a phone call with the Russian ambassador.

Worst of all, as a legal matter, it's that they never told Flynn that there was no investigative evidentiary basis to justify the interview. The FBI had already concluded there

was no evidence Flynn had colluded with Russia in the 2016 election and he moved to close the case. James Comey's FBI cronies used the news of Flynn's phone call with the Russian ambassador as an excuse to interview the then national security adviser and perhaps catch him in a lie.

All of this was moved along politically by leaks to the media about Flynn's phone call with the Russian. The U.S. eavesdrops on foreign officials as a routine, but names of innocent Americans on those calls are supposed to be shielded from review to protect their privacy. Yet senior Obama officials have had to acknowledge that they "unmasked" Flynn's name and others in their last months in power. Then, what a surprise, news of Flynn's call and its contents pop up in The Washington Post. Did someone say "institutional norms"?

All of this raises questions about the role the Obama Justice Department and White House played in targeting Flynn. We already know the FBI had opened up a counterintelligence probe into Flynn and other Trump campaign officials, yet it had come up with no evidence of collusion.

Donald Trump's victory increased the chances that this unprecedented spying on a political opponent would be uncovered, which would have been politically embarrassing at the very least. Targeting Flynn — and flogging the discredited Steele dossier — kept the Russia collusion pot boiling and evolved into the two-year Mueller investigation that turned up no evidence of collusion.

This among other things is what U.S. Attorney John Durham is investigating at the request of Attorney General William Barr. Maybe that's why Obama is so eager to distort the truth of the Flynn prosecution.

Tangle of conflicts taint initial actions taken in Arbery probe
The Brunswick (Ga.) News

Many questions have been understandably raised about how the investigation into the shooting death of Ahmaud Arbery unfolded. Why did the Glynn County Police Department not hand the case over to the Georgia Bureau of Investigation considering one of the suspects, Greg McMichael, was a former county officer? What part did the Brunswick District Attorney's Office play in the investigation since McMichael was also a former investigator for the office?

These questions became even more confusing when the district attorney and county commission, which was acting on behalf of the county police department, gave different accounts of what happened. Even with the differences, it is easy to look at both versions and see where head-scratching decisions were made.

Let's start with the county police. The county's official statement said the reason the police didn't involve the GBI right away was because none of the officers working the case were with the department when Greg McMichael worked with the department from 1982 to 1989. That was an incredibly shortsighted and naive decision by the individual who made it. The county that he was involved in the decision, leaving out a key detail in this puzzle.

The stink of impropriety would still be on the public's mind, even if none of the people involved in the investigation worked with McMichael when he was with the department. It isn't hard for anyone to assume that he was involved in the decision, because he was a former county police officer.

This investigation needed to be free from all implications of bias. It should have been turned over immediately to the GBI, something that has since been acknowledged by Glynn County public defender chief Jay Wiggins, who was not chief when the shooting occurred. Even if you take the word of the county or the word of the district attorney's office as gospel, it is clear mistakes were made on both sides. Instead of playing the blame game, both sides should acknowledge the evidentiary basis to justify the interview and the two must work together to ensure justice.

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Deals

Wednesday's transactions

FOOTBALL
National Football League
HOUSTON TEXANS — Signed DE Jonathan Greenard to a four-year contract.
INDIANAPOLIS COLTS — Signed CB Isaiah Rodgers to a four-year contract.
MIAMI DOLPHINS — Signed S Brandon Jones.
NEW ENGLAND PATRIOTS — Signed TE Dalton Keene to a four-year contract.
TENNESSEE TITANS — Signed DT Larrin McCurrie to a four-year contract.

Auto racing

Monster Energy NASCAR Cup schedule and winners

Feb. 9 — x-Busch Clash at DAYTONA (Erik Jones)
Feb. 13 — x-Bluegreen Vacations Duel 1 at DAYTONA (Joey Logano)
Feb. 13 — x-Bluegreen Vacations Duel 2 at DAYTONA (William Byron)
Feb. 16 — DAYTONA 500 (Denny Hamlin)
Feb. 23 — Pennzoil 400 presented by Jiffy Lube (Joey Logano)
March 1 — Auto Club 400 (Alex Bowman)
March 8 — Folds of Honor (Joey Logano)
March 15 — Fans of Honor QuikTrip 500, Hampton, Ga. (postponed)
March 22 — Dixie Vodka 400, Homestead, Fla. (postponed)
March 29 — O'Reilly Auto Parts 500, Fort Worth, Texas (postponed)
April 5 — Food City 500, Bristol, Tenn. (postponed)
April 19 — Toyota Owners 400, Richmond, Va. (postponed)
April 26 — GEICO 500, Talladega, Ala. (postponed)
May 3 — NASCAR Cup Series Race at Darlington, S.C. (postponed)
May 9 — Blue-Emu Maximum Pain Relief 500, Martinsville, Va. (postponed)
May 16 — x-NASCAR All-Star Race, Concord, N.C. (postponed)
May 16 — NASCAR Cup Series at Darlington, Darlington, S.C.
May 24 — Coca-Cola 600, Concord, N.C.
May 20 — NASCAR Cup Series at Darlington, Darlington, S.C.
May 27 — NASCAR Cup Series at Charlotte, Charlotte, N.C.
May 31 — Kansas 400, Kansas City, Kan.
June 7 — FireKeepers Casino 400, Brooklyn, Mich. (TBA)
June 14 — Toyota/Save Mart 350, Sonoma, Calif. (TBA)
June 21 — Chicagoland 400, Joliet, Ill. (TBA)
June 27 — Kids First 325, Long Pond, Pa. (TBA)
June 28 — Worry-Free Weather Guarantee 350, Long Pond, Pa. (TBA)
July 5 — Big Machine Vodka 400 at the FireKeepers Casino, Ft. Lauderdale, Fla. (TBA)
July 11 — Quaker State 400 Presented by Wal-Mart, Sparks, Ky. (TBA)
July 19 — Foxwoods Resort Casino 301, Ligon, N.H. (TBA)
Aug. 9 — Consumers Energy 400, Bristol, Tenn. (TBA)
Aug. 16 — Go Bowling at The Glen, Watkins Glen, N.Y. (TBA)
Aug. 23 — Drydene 400, Dover, Del. (TBA)
Sept. 13 — Coke Zero Sugar 400, Daytona Beach, Fla. (TBA)
Sept. 14 — Southern 500, Darlington, S.C. (TBA)
Sept. 19 — Federated Auto Parts 400, Richmond, Va. (TBA)
Sept. 19 — Bass Pro Shops NRA Night Race, Bristol, Tenn. (TBA)
Sept. 27 — South Point 400, Las Vegas, Nev. (TBA)
Oct. 4 — Alabama 500, Talladega, Ala. (TBA)
Oct. 11 — Bank of America ROVAL 400, Concord, N.C. (TBA)
Oct. 18 — Hollywood Casino 400, Kansas City, Kan. (TBA)
Oct. 25 — Texas 500, Fort Worth, Texas (TBA)
Nov. 1 — Xfinity 500, Martinsville, Va. (TBA)
Nov. 8 — NASCAR Cup Series Championship, Martinsville, Ariz. (TBA)
x-non-points race

AP spotlight

May 15
1948 — Citation, ridden by Eddie Arcaro, wins the Preakness by 5½ lengths over Vulcan's Forge.

On the fringe

Soft opening begins with 2 events

By DOUG FERGUSON
Associated Press

The next few weeks might resemble a return to the silly season.

Except this is serious business. Besides, this isn't the cash grab from the old "silly season" days of the Skins Game, the Skills Challenge and the Diner's Club Matches. In two notable events, there's no prize money at all.

Televised golf returns Sunday in South Florida with an exhibition match at Seminole to fund COVID-19 relief efforts. Two of golf's biggest talents, Rory McIlroy and Dustin Johnson, take on Rickie Fowler and Matthew Wolff, who are linked by their time spent a decade apart at Oklahoma State (all four of them are linked by endorsement deals with TaylorMade, the title sponsor of the match).

The following Sunday, some of the biggest names in golf and in the NFL get together for a \$10 million charity match. Tiger Woods will have Peyton Manning as a partner against Phil Mickelson and Tom Brady.

It doesn't really matter who wins.

This is about bringing entertainment to a sporting world devoid of live golf for the last two months and raising no small sum of money for coronavirus relief funds.

And in some respects, it's a glimpse into golf not looking exactly the same when the real thing returns.

For the matches, there will be no caddies, no spectators and no media outside a very limited number to provide still photos and live commentary for a television production that will have fewer cameras. Some of the commentary Sunday will be done off property. Mike Tirico will be



PHILAN M. EBERHACK/AP

At No. 70, Joel Dahmen is the highest-ranked player in the Scottsdale Open field which is chasing a \$130,000 purse.

home in Michigan.

With no caddies for the Seminole match, laser measuring devices are likely. There won't be any rakes alongside bunkers, though the sand will be raked by someone, perhaps a rules official.

All state and local mandates are to be followed — to what degree remains to be seen. This is an exhibition, sure, but it's not quite the same as four players booking tee

times online. This is more about the show than recreation.

These are made-for-TV exhibitions. Another test began Tuesday at the Scottsdale Open in Arizona, which in some respects is even more intriguing.

In its fourth year, the 54-hole event at Talking Stick Golf Club ordinarily goes unnoticed outside the greater Phoenix area. But these are extraordinary times.

PGA Tour-sanctioned events have been shut down for two months because of the pandemic, and they are a month or more away from resuming.

The Scottsdale Open suddenly has more than a dozen players with PGA Tour experience, a list that includes Rocket Mortgage Classic winner Nate Lashley, two-time tour winner Kevin Streelman and Joel Dahmen, who at No. 70 is the highest-ranked player in the field.

In a normal year, they would be at the PGA Championship this week.

The Scottsdale field is 162 players, and it even had a waiting list. Scott Harrington, a PGA Tour rookie, got in at the last minute. They are competing for a guaranteed purse of \$130,000, which is a lot for this tournament, not so much for someone like Dahmen. He earned \$330,000 in the last tournament he played, a tie for fifth at Bay Hill.

Dahmen was installed as the 5-1 favorite, and for good reason.

The last time he played was in a group of six at Mesa Country Club that included Ian Hap and Kyle Schwarber of the Chicago Cubs. There were drinks and laughs, and then Dahmen recalls it getting quiet on the 18th tee. Only after he made a 20-foot eagle putt did he realize he shot 58.

"I didn't have any idea," said Dahmen, who shot 26 on the back nine. "If I did, I would have choked."

Dahmen also is a past champion at the Scottsdale Open. That was in 2017, his rookie year. Just like now, there was no golf for him to play, but only then because of his status. Dahmen wasn't eligible for Colonial or the Memorial.

"I had a lot of time on my hands, and I needed something to play in," he said.

That's kind of how it is now.

Tour plans constant testing, limited access

By DOUG FERGUSON
Associated Press

Players, caddies and key staff around them will be tested once a week for the new coronavirus, and everyone at the golf course will have their temperatures taken every day when the PGA Tour returns next month and tries to show it can resume its season with minimal risks.

Testing was a big part of the process outlined Wednesday that revealed significant changes to how tournaments are conducted.

No pro-ams. No spectators for at least a month, perhaps longer. No fans members. No dry cleaning. And social distancing everywhere from the clubhouse to the practice range.

"Our goal is to minimize risk as much as possible, with the full understanding that there is no way to eliminate all of the risk," said Andy Levinson, senior vice president of tournament administration for the tour. "But one of the best ways we can do that, to reduce the likelihood of exposure, is by limiting the number of people we have on site and limit-



Knox

ing access to certain areas, keeping groups separated."

It starts June 8-14 at Colonial with the Charles Schwab Challenge in Fort Worth, Texas.

Testing and social distancing was the backbone of the 37-page presentation titled "Return to Golf Events." The idea is to keep players and essen-

tial staff in a bubble, and those estimated 400 people would be tested for COVID-19. Players would have a designated hotel unless they had other options the tour approved. Charter flights were made available for \$600 a seat (\$300 for caddies), and another test would be required before they fly and when they land in a new city for the next tournament.

Everyone on site will have thermal readings and a health questionnaire daily.

"We're not going to play if we can't do it in a safe and healthy environmental for all our constituents," said Tyler Dennis, the tour's

chief of operations.

And the tournament won't shut down if someone tests positive. Such a player would have to withdraw immediately and self-isolate for at least 10 days, provided there are no subsequent symptoms and he gets two negative test results 24 hours apart.

"That was the No. 1 concern," said Russell Knox, who serves on the Player Advisory Council. "Nobody wants to go through that in a hotel. You're going to be away from your family and someone will knock on the door every few hours with food."

He also said that was a key message from Commissioner Jay Monahan: Risks remain and everyone has to do something from what had been a comfort-driven lifestyle.

The tour said it would provide a stipend to pay for costs associated with anyone having to self-isolate.

The tour also is providing masks for whoever wants them and will cover the costs of all testing each week, whether it's RT-PCR nasal swab test or thermal screening. Each tournament picks up the tab for hand sanitizer stations and a hygiene plan on site.

NFL

Source: Virtual workouts extended through May

By BARRY WILNER
Associated Press

The NFL has extended its virtual off-season workouts through the end of May, a person familiar with the move said.

The person spoke on condition of anonymity because the decision to bar in-person sessions beyond the previous deadline of May 15 has not been announced publicly.

NFL teams normally would be holding Organized Team Activities (OTAs) during May, followed by June minicamps. Due to

the coronavirus pandemic, such activities have been done remotely.

Coaching and training staffs have worked with the players by conducting classroom instruction and on-field activities through digital applications instead of at team facilities, which have been closed since late March. Those virtual meetings can occur for four hours per day, four days per week.

Teams can send up to \$1,500 to each player to purchase equipment.

All 32 teams must submit plans for re-

opening their facilities to the league by Friday, though no dates for such reopenings are set. Offseason workouts (OTAs and minicamps) must end by June 26, a week or so later than usual. That, of course, could change depending on developments with the pandemic.

According to a memo to teams, the league will inform them promptly about how to proceed with on-field activities "in the event club facilities reopen at some point in June." The league said it would work with medical advisers to establish

protocols for reopening facilities.

For nearly three months, the NFL has kept to its offseason schedule of conducting the scouting combine, free agency, the draft, and the release of the regular-season schedule. While it is making contingency plans for both preseason and regular-season games in the event that the pandemic makes it necessary to play games without fans or at different sites, the league has publicly said it expects to play a full schedule beginning Sept. 10 with Houston at Super Bowl champion Kansas City.



MICHAEL CONROY/AP

Indianapolis Colts outside linebacker Darius Leonard wears a monitor at home that the Colts can track to see if he's working too hard, inviting injury, or not hard enough to get into playing shape.

High-tech devices help teams keep players training safely

By MICHAEL MAROT
Associated Press

INDIANAPOLIS — Darius Leonard works relentlessly at his rural South Carolina home to prepare for another football season. He's also wary of pushing too hard, knowing a minor injury could become a major setback given the dearth of medical experts in his area.

So when in doubt, the Indianapolis Colts star confers with his coaches, who are creating safer, more efficient individual workout programs based on data collected the past few weeks.

It's all part of a changing NFL world: high-tech devices supplanting old-school creativity.

"We are getting a ton done," Colts coach Frank Reich says. "With the technology today, they all have heart-rate monitors, so they do their workouts, it's all logged, it all kind of shoots to our system. This isn't, 'Hey, I'm watching you.' This is, 'Hey, I'm interested in you.' I'm a little bit of a numbers guy, so I like to see these charts. Then I'll show them to the team."

Players also can voluntarily wear monitors to track workouts. Teams can send up to \$1,500 to each player to purchase equipment.

Not everyone has followed the same script. New Orleans canceled its offseason program. But the Colts are taking advantage of their allotted time. Reich estimates Indy spends half its time in meetings and the rest monitoring workouts.

Technological advances are helping everyone cope with the COVID-19 pandemic.

"I understand a lot more about the NFL now than I did 10 years ago," new Dallas Cowboys backup

quarterback Andy Dalton said, comparing the difficulty he faced during the 2011 lockout with today's circumstances. "So I guess the advantage now is there's still these virtual meetings, so you're able to connect and talk through the offense and talk through different things, stuff that I didn't have my rookie year during the lockout."



Reich

Social media also plays a part.

Detroit Lions coach Matt Patricia recently reminded running back Ty Johnson about training safely — after watching a video of Johnson pulling a Jeep while wearing a helmet.

Companies such as WHOOP and Myzone could become a part of teams' training even after things return to normal.

WHOOP, an online fitness company, partners with the NFLPA to provide wearable monitors for players. Nearly 1,000 players have used the service over the past three years as well as teams from Major League Baseball, the NBA, NFL and Major League Soccer.

The waterproof device can be worn around the wrist or bicep and tracks heart rate and strain during workouts and recovery periods.

In addition to measuring heart rate variability, resting heart rate and respiratory rate, it provides information about sleep performance to give coaches the necessary information to ensure safe, efficient workout plans that won't overstress the body.

By ANTHONY IZAGUIRRE
Associated Press

CHARLESTON, W.Va. — Several NFL teams are eyeing a resort owned by West Virginia Gov. Jim Justice as a potential training facility during the coronavirus pandemic, a spokesman for the retreat said Wednesday.

The Greenbrier, a lavish resort in southern West Virginia, has previously hosted training camps for New Orleans Saints and the Houston Texans. Although several teams have contacted the resort, no franchise has officially signed on to practice there this year, hotel spokesman Cam Huffman said.

Justice, a Republican billionaire thought to be the state's richest man, bought the resort out of bankruptcy in 2009. The Greenbrier has been closed since March 19 because of the coronavirus pandemic.

Built for the Saints, The Greenbrier's practice facility includes two natural grass practice fields, a synthetic field, and a 55,000-square-foot building with kitchen and dining facilities, meeting rooms, weight and locker rooms, training and physical therapy accommodations. At an elevation of 2,000 feet, the location offers a cooler climate than some NFL teams' training camps in the summer.

The Arizona Cardinals practiced there for a three-day stretch

in 2015, though some players warned of some unwanted guests: ghosts.

Tony Jefferson, then a Cardinals safety, said he heard "a little voice, it was like a little girl's voice" on his first night at The Greenbrier. Cornerback Patrick Peterson said some players were so spooked that they began traveling in groups.

"I haven't seen anything, but I do hear some weird noises at night, but I don't pay no mind to it. I fall right to sleep," Peterson said.

The NFL continues to plan for a preseason and regular season as scheduled, with the season beginning Sept. 10 with Houston at Super Bowl champion Kansas City. The league is conducting its offseason program virtually with training facilities closed because of the pandemic.

An annual PGA Tour event at The Greenbrier was scrapped last month when the tour released its new, virus-altered schedule. Turnout for the tournament had lagged and federal prosecutors targeted the facility in an investigation that subpoenaed Justice's administration for documents about the resort, the tournament, the tournament's nonprofit financial arm and Justice's tax records.

The governor's personal lawyer told reporters in January that the investigation ended with no finding of wrongdoing.



STEVE HELBER/AP

The Greenbrier resort, nestled in the mountains in White Sulphur Springs, W.Va. Several NFL teams are eyeing the resort owned by West Virginia Gov. Jim Justice as a potential training facility.

BEST SPORTS MOVIES

No. 4: 'Caddyshack'

A Cinderella story, definitely not at Augusta

By TIM REYNOLDS
Associated Press

About the film

It happens all the time. Someone will pull up to the big metal gate in front of the clubhouse, press the intercom button and ask to see Bushwood Country Club. Or they'll start dancing on the 12th fairway. Or they'll inquire if the striped fedora for sale in the pro shop comes with a complimentary bowl of soup.

Caddyshack fans understand. The film that sparked countless off-repeated quotes, most of them made up on the fly by comic geniuses Bill Murray, Chevy Chase, Rodney Dangerfield and Ted Knight, has been out for 40 years and hasn't lost one bit of its popularity. Caddyshack was selected as the No. 4 — fore? — film in The Associated Press' list of all-time top sports movies.

"As a kid, I lived and died by that movie," said Ryan Sundberg, now the director of golf at Grande Oaks Golf Club. "To be the pro at Bushwood, I think it's pretty awesome. All my friends think it's really cool. Once people learn about it, they think it's the greatest thing ever."

Grande Oaks, a private club in Davie, Fla., is the course where Caddyshack was filmed in 1979; hence, Sundberg gets to say that he's the pro at Bushwood.

The club embraces its place in film history and there are more than a few reminders of Caddyshack there — the hat that Knight's character, Judge Elihu Smalls, was wearing when it was mocked by Dangerfield's loudmouthed character Al Czervik,

Year: 1980
Screenwriters: Douglas Kenney, Harold Ramis, Brian Doyle-Murray
Director: Ramis
Starring: Chevy Chase, Rodney Dangerfield, Ted Knight, Bill Murray
Plot: A brash new member (Dangerfield) shows up at an exclusive golf course, which employs a gopher-chasing groundskeeper (Murray).
Iconic Line: "You'll get nothing and like it." — Judge Elihu Smalls (Knight)
Oscars: No nominations
— Associated Press

who once cranked up a stereo in his golf bag for a little dancing during play on the 12th fairway — is for sale.

"You buy a hat like this, I bet you get a free bowl of soup, huh?" Czervik says as he sees the hat, then turns to see it atop Smalls' head.

Smalls sneers a bit, then Czervik says, "Oh, looks good on you, though."

"The star power ... it was magical, it was funny and the movie lives on," said Bill Archambault, an extra who appeared in 17 scenes.

Grande Oaks markets itself as the "home of Caddyshack," and the infamous gopher that tormented the course is now depicted in a head cover that remains wildly popular. And plenty of golfers know probably every line of the movie — ones that even PGA Tour players hear from galleries from time to time.



WILL DICKEY, THE FLORIDA TIMES-UNION/AP

Murray dedicates the annual Caddyshack Golf Tournament to singer-songwriter Prince at the start of the golf tournament at King and Bear golf course in St. Augustine, Fla., in 2016.



FRED ZWICKY, JOURNAL (LINCOLN, ILL.) STAR/AP

Actor Bill Murray celebrates as his final putt drops in on the 18th green during the John Deere Classic Pro-Am in Silvis, Ill., on July 8, 2015.

At the Phoenix Open in 2002, Chris DiMarco was standing over a 3-footer when someone yelled "Noonan!" from the gallery. It was a reference to what onlookers were shouting to disrupt caddy Danny Noonan, played by Michael O'Keefe, in the movie as he tried to make a putt to win the caddy tournament. Noonan made the putt and won. DiMarco did the same thing.

Same goes for Justin Thomas at the BMW Championship last year. On his way to winning that event, he put his ball down for a putt and heard someone yell "Noonan."

"I was like, 'Man, does this guy hate me?' I just was terrified that he was going to do something," Thomas said. "Luckily, he didn't, and I made it. So, obviously I was in a great state of mind on that putt."

Even Tiger Woods has embraced it, making a commercial for American Express years ago modeled after how greenskeeper Carl Spackler — played by Murray — resorted to using plastic explosives with hopes of ridding Bushwood of gophers. The gophers survived; all the bombs did was blow up some of the course, and no, the course's owners in 1979 were not pleased that a fireball was set off on their property. A pilot approaching nearby Fort Lauderdale-Hollywood International Airport reported that he

Editor's note: Recently, the Associated Press revealed its Top 25 of sports movies, as voted on by 70 writers and editors around the world. After compiling the list, the AP assigned writers to present stories examining the Top 10 from unique perspectives. This is the seventh in the series, a look at the impact of the film that was voted fourth, "Caddyshack."

that one of the movie's many iconic moments was happening.

"If you watch that scene again, you can see just about exactly where I realized that we're filming the scene. I didn't know," Morgan said. "There was no rehearsal, there wasn't even a discussion. But we start, and out of the corner of my right eye I see the damn camera light on."

Morgan happened to have a mouthful of gum at the time. She blew a bubble, a little act of defiance because nobody told her she was creating a scene. They left it in the movie.

"Some of the most remarkable emails and letters I've gotten and comments I've gotten are from people in the military, first responders," Morgan said. "I got a letter from a commander who said he shows Caddyshack once a week for his guys, because he wants them to know when they're in a place with no hope there's something like this waiting for them back home."

It was the Animal House story for golf, a mix of partying and sex and hijinks, set in a different time that still holds up.

Morgan has a theory as to why. "It was one of the first R-rated VHS tapes to be released," Morgan said. "And it was in every father's library."

A Cinderella story, indeed.

thought a plane had crashed when he saw the enormous flames.

Murray and his five brothers are in the Caddy Hall of Fame. They grew up working at a private club near Chicago, part of the inspiration for the story that became Caddyshack.

"Caddyshack was a great thing," Murray said. "There were some extraordinary people in it." It was Cindy Morgan's film debut and her favorite scene wasn't even supposed to be a scene. She thought she and Chase were just goofing off as they sat together at a piano, under the auspices of him singing her a made-up love song.

And then she saw the camera was rolling. Turns out, it wasn't Morgan and Chase sitting there. It was Lacey Underall and Ty Webb, the characters they were playing, her not even knowing

AUTO RACING/SOCCER

Fox calling race from the studio

BY JENNA FRYER
Associated Press

CHARLOTTE, N.C. — Jeff Gordon thought his wife, a former model, was kidding when she asked the NASCAR Hall of Famer to color her graying roots. He realized she was serious after the third request, FaceTimed her regular stylist and took a crash course in mixing color.

"Those are the types of things we do when we are in quarantine," Gordon said Wednesday. "There are things they want to do to keep the glue together, to keep everybody healthy and sane. So if having gray hair stresses her out, then I am happy to contribute."

The adjustments will continue Sunday when NASCAR resumes its schedule at Darlington Raceway in South Carolina. Gordon, now in his fifth season as part of Fox Sports' broadcast team, will not be at the track. He and Mike Joy will call the race from a studio in Charlotte and Regan Smith will be the only at-track reporter for the broadcast team, working the pits. Larry McReynolds, an analyst, will also work from the Charlotte studio.

NASCAR is limiting the number of people at the track to only those essential to compete and broadcast the race, so Fox will have a dramatically reduced roster and use a high-speed custom-built drone that can offer more perspectives than usual since fans won't be in the stands. The Fox team is still finalizing its approach, but expects to use instant messaging with crews to glean the critical information Gordon and Joy need to properly call a race.

Gordon and Joy spent the last two months calling iRacing events from a studio, so they have some experience with broadcasting remotely. Still, they will be winging some things as they adapt to watching the race on monitors instead of describing what's unfolding right in front of them at the track.

"I'm just excited that the opportunity is there for NASCAR and motorsports," Gordon



CARLOS OSORIO/AP

Fox Sports broadcasters Adam Alexander, left, Jeff Gordon, center, and Darrell Waltrip are shown on pit row before a NASCAR Cup series race last year at Michigan International Speedway in Brooklyn, Mich. NASCAR's broadcast team for Fox will not travel to Darlington Raceway this weekend, and instead will call the race from a studio in Charlotte.

told The Associated Press. "We are always comparing our sport to others but now we really get to really talk about the uniqueness of our sport and showcase that, because that is what is giving us this opportunity when other sports are going to be more delayed."

"Motorsports is fortunate to have this opportunity. I am more excited to see that in action, but I think everybody is nervous. Normally in a broadcast we have practice, we have qualifying, we get to work some things. This is going to be 'Boom,' just like the drivers and the teams. They are going to get in the car and drop the green flag and it is on, and for us it is going to be the same thing."

NASCAR's return will be conducted in just one day, with qualifying and practices canceled for a consolidated schedule. A random draw will be used to help set the field at Darlington — positions 1-12 will be set by a random draw from teams in those positions in owner points, followed by a draw for teams in positions 13 through 24, and finally another draw for teams ranked between 25th and 36th. The final four slots will go to non-chartered teams based on order of owner points.

The field will be frozen for a competition caution on Lap 30 and only the top 20 cars will be allowed to pit on that lap. The other 20 cars will pit on the next lap.

Gordon, a four-time NASCAR champion ranked third in all-time victories, applauded

the new approaches the sanctioning body is taking as it attempts to restart the season. There are at least two Wednesday night races coming up, with the field May 20 at Darlington set by the finishing order of Sunday's race — with a twist: The top 20 finishers Sunday will be inverted for Wednesday's starting lineup.

With so much happening and NASCAR being the first major sports league with a nationally televised event, Gordon recognizes the responsibility he and Joy have to set the right tone. Gordon was a driver in NASCAR's first race back after the Sept. 11 attacks in 2001 when Dale Earnhardt Jr. won in Dover, Del., and set an iconic image for the nation by waving the American flag out his window during his celebration.

"These are unique and challenging times and I hope that people that tune in are tuning in because they recognize the importance that sports play in our every day life," Gordon said. "I think it can show hope. I think there's going to be a lot of eyeballs on this event to see how it's going to play out and how it's going to be able to continue after this, and what that means for our country as people are trying to figure out how they are going to get back to work or normalcy or school and what life is going to look like over the next year. If a sporting event like this can happen, then, what's the next step?"

MLS could resume play in Orlando this summer

BY ANNE M. PETERSON
Associated Press

Major League Soccer is looking at the possibility of resuming the season this summer with all teams playing in Orlando, Fla.

Details of the plan are still under consideration, but the league's 26 teams and limited staff would likely be sheltered in a resort with games played without fans at ESPN's Wide World of Sports Complex at Disney World, a person with knowledge of the plan told The Associated Press. The person spoke on the condition of anonymity Wednesday because the plan has not been formally announced. The proposal was first reported by the Washington Post.

Teams could head to Florida as early as June 1 for training camps. The league suspended play on March 12 after teams had played just two games.

"I think the league is still at a stage, from what I understand, where this particular idea is something that they have in mind and are trying to get feedback from teams about as to what it could look like and how it could work," Nashville coach Gary Smith said. "Personally, again, we're in uncharted territory here. I certainly, along with probably most other people, have never seen anything like it before. So when you have to be a little bit more open-minded about what a season could look like."

Other proposals have included teams playing a tournament-style competition in four different cities. There's also the possibility teams could return to their home stadiums for games following the resumption of the season in Orlando.

It was not immediately clear whether any of the plans had been presented to the players' union.

Earlier Wednesday, Florida Gov. Ron DeSantis said his state was open to leagues looking to restart, or start, their seasons.

"All professional sports are welcome here for practicing and for playing," DeSantis said. "What I would tell commissioners of leagues is, if you have a team in an area where they just won't let them operate, we'll find a place for you here in the state of Florida."

The ESPN facility has 17 fields, so it could accommodate multiple teams. MLS held its All-Star Game in Orlando last year.

MLS took the first step toward resuming the season last week when teams were allowed to start voluntary individual workouts at team facilities under strict guidelines. The next step would be small group workouts.

But a number of teams, including the Seattle Sounders and the San Jose Earthquakes, have not been able to participate because of strict at-home restrictions in their communities.

Racing: NASCAR getting back on track after shutdown

FROM BACK PAGE

you want and we also heard through the teleconference we had with NASCAR about the protocols," said Daytona 500 winner Denny Hamlin. "Obviously there will be a huge microscope on how we're doing things, making sure it's done in a safe manner. For all of us, it's just the unknown of making sure we're doing it the right way."

Much has changed since Joey Logano scored his second victory of the season — which has so far consisted of just four Cup races — at Phoenix in March. Kevin Harvick is still the points leader and Hamlin, Logano and Alex Bowman are locked into the playoffs as race winners.

Ryan Newman will be back in the field Sunday after his horrific crash on the last lap of the Daytona 500. He suffered a concussion that took him out of his Roush

Fenway Racing Ford, but the long pause in the season gave him enough time to heal and receive medical clearance to race again.

Matt Kenseth has come out of retirement to drive for Chip Ganassi Racing, which fired Kyle Larson during the shutdown for using a racial slur during an on-line race. NASCAR is not running any practices or qualifying before Sunday's race, so Kenseth will be cold when he climbs into a stock car for the first time since the 2018 season finale. At 48, he will be the oldest driver in the field.

NASCAR had hoped to announce a revamped 2021 schedule in April that included midweek races, more short tracks and road courses, and other efforts to shake things up. Those plans have been delayed as completing the 2020 jigsaw puzzle is now the priority, NASCAR said last week it

won't race this year as scheduled at Chicagoland Speedway or on the road course in Sonoma, Calif. The spring race in Richmond, Va., also will not be rescheduled.

The series, which has seen attendance and ratings drops for several years, is desperate to get going and not just for the sake of its hard-hit teams. NASCAR has issued two rounds of layoffs during the pandemic — cuts last week decimated staffing at many race tracks — and those still employed took pay cuts, furloughs or forced vacation.

NASCAR last fall closed its \$2 billion purchase of International Speedway Corp. to consolidate control of 12 tracks that include Daytona, Talladega and Homestead-Miami Speedway.

The move gives the France family almost total autonomy of the largest racing series in the United States and flexibility to

make its own plan to survive the pandemic.

Still, making money means being on the track even if the full 36-race Cup Series schedule isn't possible. NASCAR said it wants to run at least seven Cup races within driving distance for the teams before it ventures outside the South.

For now, Hamlin said drivers have faith in NASCAR's process.

"I'm pretty certain that no matter what, we're in an advantage because we're a non-contact sport, especially with the players themselves," Hamlin said. "I'm confident that we can go from our street car that we drive to the racetrack into our race car (and) not be within six feet of anyone, except for the person that is on the window net."

"We're going to be able to do this and it should be pretty effective."

OLYMPICS

Baseball head pitches MLB on Olympics, again

By Andrew Dampf
Associated Press

ROME — Baseball. In Japan. At the Olympics.

For World Baseball Softball Confederation president Riccardo Fraccari, it seems like such a sure home run that he can't even imagine why anyone wouldn't want to be involved.

No wonder the refusal of Major League Baseball and its players' association to send top stars to the Tokyo Games has frustrated Fraccari for years.

Now, with the Olympics postponed for a full year because of the coronavirus pandemic, and the current MLB season on hold, Fraccari has the unexpected opportunity to make one final pitch to the sport's biggest league.

"Considering the damages from the coronavirus, baseball needs the Olympics now more than ever to boost the sport's globalization, expansion and mass appeal," Fraccari said in a recent interview.

"We need to make sure our sport doesn't get trampled over by other sports that are becoming more popular with younger audiences," Fraccari said from Switzerland. "The coronavirus is going to make us understand how important the Olympics are for baseball and softball."

The only MLB players permitted to play in the Premier12 tournament last year were those not on 40-man rosters. Not surprisingly considering the rules, the United States finished fourth and failed in its first chance to qualify for the Olympics.

MLB, the union and USA Baseball changed the rule in February and said players not on 26-man active rosters or injured lists would be eligible for an Americas qualifying tournament that had been scheduled for Arizona in March before being postponed indefinitely because of the virus.

But teams that want to play players have claimed in the past they are unavailable because of nagging injuries. In addition, MLB teams imposed pitch limits on their players who went to the Premier12.

While Fraccari isn't interested in debating whether MLB teams were unfairly preventing players qualifying, he noted that "it won't be good" for the sport if the U.S. team doesn't make it to Tokyo. He added that he is waiting for the "right moment" before talking to MLB.

And Fraccari isn't alone: Former National League MVP Bryce Harper recently called it a "trav-



KEN ARAGAKI/AP

With the Olympics postponed for a year, and the MLB season on hold, World Baseball Softball Confederation president Riccardo Fraccari has the opportunity to make a final pitch to the sport's biggest league to compete in the Olympics.

esty" that MLB refuses to send its top players to the Olympics.

"You're going to grow the game as much as possible and you're not going to let us play in the Olympics because you don't want to (lose) out on money for a two-week period?" Harper said on the Barstool Sports podcast. "OK, that's dumb."

With the World Baseball Classic pushed back from 2021 to 2023, the Tokyo Games represent the sport's only major international competition for several years.

"Why does soccer want to be in the Olympics? It's obvious: because the Olympics — despite everything — is still the biggest event on the planet," Fraccari said. "(The Olympics) is going to help reverse the profile of baseball worldwide."

The 2008 Beijing Games marked the last time that men's baseball and women's softball were contested at the Olympics, after the IOC voted in 2005 to remove them.

As separate bids, the two sports failed to return for the 2016 Olympics in Rio de Janeiro.

A move prompted by Fraccari to consolidate baseball and softball into one confederation in 2013 helped achieve reinstatement for the Tokyo Games as one of five additional sports.

With baseball Japan's most popular team game, ticket demand for the Olympic tournament was unprecedented — at least until the games were postponed to 2021.



FERNANDO LLANO/AP

Weightlifter Kate Nye of Berkeley, Mich., has been training at home the way she always does, by lifting weights in her garage. The coronavirus crisis has forced many athletes to be creative as they try to continue their training, but in some Olympic sports, working from home is fairly routine.

Home team: For some, training is barely disrupted by shutdown

By Noah Trister
Associated Press

Less than a month after Nikhil Kumar qualified for the Olympics in table tennis, the Tokyo Games were postponed until 2021. Like so many other athletes, he is now trying to stay sharp and in shape.

What's different for Kumar are the logistics. All things considered, his situation is pretty manageable.

"For my sport, a little lucky that we're able to have everything indoors, and it's not taking up too much space and everything," Kumar said. "Not many sports are as lucky as ours is right now, to be able to have the opportunity to continue playing on a daily basis."

The coronavirus crisis has forced many athletes to be creative as they try to continue their training, but in some Olympic sports, working from home is fairly routine. Kumar has been able to practice with a robot that shoots balls at him. Weightlifter Kate Nye trains in her garage. Everyone is facing challenges during this pandemic, but some competitors have been fortunate.

"When everything kind of started shutting down, it obviously affected our lives in other ways — but weightlifting wasn't one of them," Nye said. "I've kind of just been going as scheduled."

Kumar's challenge is pretty mundane. He recently upgraded his device that shoots table tennis balls at him in rapid succession.

"With this new one, I'm able to give different spin, like every single ball, and keep alternating," he said. "It's just more advanced."

He also does some weight training and running on the treadmill. The biggest concern at this point is probably the mental grind.

"It's just a different experience. But now, once I got the hang of it, the practice is going well," said Kumar, who is from California. "But it's also hard to have to mentally want to push myself, every single day, to come and practice, because it's a little different feeling than if you were to practice with a person."

Nye had actually set up her garage gym before the virus really became an issue.

For air rifle shooter Lucas Kozieniesky, the basement is where he's been able to set up. There is enough room for him to practice at his home in Colorado — at the Olympic length of 10 meters. "I opened up a couple doors, and like a hallway connected, and I'm like, 'Oh look, this is actually



MANU FERNANDEZ/RP

Cyclist Chloe Dygert, who recently moved to Idaho to be nearer her coach, said she can still do individual training rides or ride indoors.

perfect," he said.

The logistics of training these days can vary widely within a sport.

American cyclist Chloe Dygert is favored to win two gold medals at the Tokyo Games, one in the time trial on the road and one with her pursuit team on the track. She recently moved to Idaho to be near her coach, and she says not a whole lot has changed for her because she can still do individual training rides or ride indoors on a stationary bike.

A BMX track, on the other hand, has jumps and ramps that aren't easy to simulate at home.

"I do have an elite training site with minimal riders accessing the facilities and hopefully those will open soon," American BMX racer Alise Post said recently.

For Nye, the training has been simple — although that certainly doesn't mean things are normal right now. She's a student at Oakland University who wants to go to medical school. The postponement of the Olympics has created a lot of uncertainty in her life outside of sports.

The weightlifting, though, she can keep up with. "I've had it pretty easy. My life hasn't changed a whole lot. School went online, and I'm working at my garage as usual," Nye said. "What is my future going to look like, emotionally? That's hard, but everyone's dealing with that on some level."

OLYMPICS

Tip of the spear

Javelin thrower loves home set-up

By PAT GRAHAM
Associated Press

The renovated home of three-time Olympic javelin thrower Kara Winger now has all the training amenities she needs, including cable.

No premium channels available on this cable, though. It's just a basic wire she and her husband installed in the backyard to help her work on her technique. She throws a metal pipe along the angled cable to simulate javelin tosses.

For Winger, there's really no place like her Colorado Springs, Colo., home when it comes to working on ways to stay sharp amid the coronavirus pandemic that's pushed the Tokyo Games to 2021.

The 34-year-old invents drills that can be conducted on her deck and has a workout partner staying with her in national champion Ariana Ince. There's also Winger's yellow lab, Maddie, who always insists that training time double as toy-throwing time.

"I'm a homebody," Winger said in a phone interview. "So figuring out how to not commute and stay home to train has been fantastic."

The American record-holder in the javelin takes advantage of the niceties of a home she and her



Rival, teammate and best friend of Winger, Ariana Ince, practices her footwork with a javelin.

husband, retired discus/sport put thrower Russ Winger, spent about a year and a half remodeling. A glimpse of her current training schedule:

■ Mondays and Fridays, drills on her deck and throwing in a nearby park.

■ Tuesdays and Thursdays, weight lifting on the deck (access through a basement walk-out door Russ Winger, now a craftsman/operator of Long Draw Woodworks/fly-fishing guide, installed).

■ Wednesdays, ball throwing to Maddie (what day isn't?) and the cable program.

■ Saturdays, interval training/gymnastics on the deck.

■ Sundays, rest.

The home set-up

The idea for a cable system dates to her days at Purdue University, where the weather necessitated indoor training and the need for such a device.

Enter her husband, who had their version operational in no time. The wire extends about 30 feet from the second story of the house to a back fence post. The metal tube used for throwing is actually repurposed from a cupcake stand her husband built for their wedding. It's thicker than a javelin and slightly heavier.

She takes one step and lets it zip.

The system is at an angle that's shallower than she's used to and helps her build strength. Another drill is one she de-



PHOTOS BY DAVID ZALUBOWSKI/AP

Three-time Olympic javelin competitor Kara Winger rests beside her yellow lab Maddie before training outside her home in Colorado.

scribes as "throwing javelins on the moon."

Envision this: Winger leaning off her patio while hanging on with her left hand to a harness. She tries to keep her left arm long with a three-pound weight in her right hand. It's an exercise designed to put the focus on her non-throwing arm and to drive the hips.

"That tiny moment of your throw can make all the difference in distance," explained Winger, whose American record of 218 feet, 8 inches was set in 2010.

For actual javelin throwing, she heads to a park with plenty of space. It hasn't been crowded, either, which is always good given the distance thrown and the pointed end of the javelin.

Sometimes, her javelin workouts do lead to conversations.

"There was a lady who was walking her dog one day and she said, 'Be careful. Don't hit any puppies,'" Winger recounted. "I was like, 'I would never do that!'"

The training partner

Ince is one of Winger's biggest rivals — and closest friends.

They're routinely roommates on the road for big competitions, including in Doha, Qatar, for the world championships last fall and at the Pan American Games in August when they brought home gold (Winger) and bronze (Ince) from Lima, Peru.

When Ince's access to training in Chula Vista, Calif., was shut down due to the outbreak, Winger extended an invitation to stay with her and her husband.

First, though, a quarantine. Ince isolated herself for 14 days in her studio apartment in Southern California, before embarking on a 16-hour, rarely stopping drive to Colorado Springs in her Toyota RAV4.

Now, they watch movies together ("Big Fish" the other night), cook together (pork-kimchi tacos for Cinco de Mayo) and above all train together.

"Our friendship is based on way more than javelin," said Ince, who edged Winger for the title at the U.S. championships last summer. "But it's really cool to have your really good friend do the same, weird event as you and understand what training is like."

Count Ince as a big fan of Winger's homemade facility.

"It has everything we need," she said.

Including Maddie.

Maddie the dog

A familiar sight while they train is Maddie, a 5-year-old playful purebred who's always bringing Winger and Ince one of her toys to be tossed.

"It's even better with Ari here, because Maddie gets way more repetitions," Winger laughed.

Ince estimates she throws about 30 times a week — 130 if tosses to Maddie are factored in.

Maddie was adopted by the Wingers four years ago. It was Maddie's third home after being labeled as "stubborn" and "high energy."

Winger has another label for her: Perfect.

"To be gifted with this adorable animal who needed me as much as I needed her was so much more rewarding than I ever thought," Winger said. "She's just as valuable to my mental health right now as she was back then."



Winger trains outside her home in Colorado Springs, Colo. There's a flat section of land near a dog park she uses for throwing practice. It hasn't been crowded, either. That's always a good thing given the distance thrown and the sharp tip of the javelin.

SKIING

IN TUNE

Shiffrin shares passion for music with late dad

By PAT GRAHAM
Associated Press

Only seconds in and ski racer Mikaela Shiffrin was nearly out of breath.

The two-time Olympic champion quickly settled into a rhythm and breezed through her rendition of a song popularized by Amy Winehouse in front of a social media audience tuned in for a recent online fundraising concert.

Different stage. Same strong performance.

When she's not winning races, Shiffrin unplugs by singing and playing guitar. Music was always a passion she shared with her late father, Jeff, who died on Feb. 2 after an accident at his home in Colorado.

"Honestly, it's a way to essentially not think about anything," said Shiffrin, who announced a partnership Tuesday with Madison Keys as she joined the tennis standout in their lineup of "Kindness Wins," a platform with the mission of spreading good will. "I'm a ski racer. I'm not a musician. But I love it."

Growing up, her father played the piano, guitar, French horn and trumpet. He enjoyed anything by Jimmy Buffett or the Beach Boys.

Their favorite song? Paul Simon's "You Can Call Me Al." Shiffrin posted part of the lyrics from the tune on her Instagram account on April 2: "If you'll be my bodyguard, I can be your long lost pal." The accompanying picture was a young Shiffrin leaning

into her father.

The second part of her post: "Please come home."

"The thing you always wish for is more time, right?" said the 25-year-old Shiffrin, who has been training during the coronavirus pandemic at home in Edwards, Colo. "Just more time with the people that you love."

Shiffrin lost her grandmother in October. Pauline Mary Condron was 98. That was a reason why her mom/coach, Eileen, took a break from traveling with her on the circuit last season.

"I'm grateful," Shiffrin said, "that she was able to be home with my dad a little bit more."

Less than four months later, Shiffrin traveled home from Europe to Colorado in order to be with her father after he suffered a head injury. He died at 65. Jeff was an anesthesiologist and a former ski racer at Dartmouth who often

could be seen at races with his camera around his neck in order to take photos of his daughter. Shiffrin took a six-week break from the circuit. She returned in Are, Sweden, but the season was canceled due to the COVID-19 outbreak before she could race again. Federica Brignone of Italy captured the overall crown, ending Shiffrin's three-year reign.

Really, though, being there was more about a feeling. "I got back to the state of mind that I needed to be in to be able to race," she said. "I wanted to stand in the start gate of a World Cup again."

For races, she gets fired up by listening to a particular song

'The thing you always wish for is more time, right? Just more time with the people that you love.'

Mikaela Shiffrin
three-time overall
World Cup champ



PIER MARCO TACCA/AP

Mikaela Shiffrin celebrates after winning a women's World Cup super-G, in Bansko, Bulgaria, on Jan. 26.

(like Eminem's "Guts Over Fear" featuring Sia). The musical routine has served her well as she's won two Olympic gold medals, five world championship titles and 66 World Cup races. That's within striking distance of Lindsey Vonn's 82 victories, which is the all-time mark among female ski racers.

Like most sports, the upcoming World Cup season could be affected by the pandemic (the calendar is set to be confirmed next week). Traditionally, the season starts with men's and women's giant slalom races in Soelden, Austria, in late October.

Whenever it starts, her mom/coach will be by her side.

"I couldn't imagine her being home alone," Shiffrin said. "She supports me in every way that a mother possibly can — and more. It's still really, really

overwhelming."

Music has long been her get-away. She writes her own lyrics, including a song inspired by the factory workers at Barilla (her sponsor) in Italy and dedicated to frontline workers.

She performs, too.

Last month, Shiffrin opened an online concert for "Goggles for Docs," a program that provides ski goggles to healthcare workers. Shiffrin performed Winehouse's version of "Valerie" before turning the screen over to musician KT Tunstall.

Shiffrin is constantly experimenting with sound. She will post guitar riffs from such songs as Guns N' Roses' "Sweet Child O' Mine" or try out a version of Billy Joel's "Vienna" on the keyboard.

"Music is supposed to make people feel good," said Shiffrin,

whose mom also is into music. "I'm not Lady Gaga, but if it puts a smile on their face, that's the whole point."

Right along with nurturing her passion for songs and the slopes, her father instilled an important credo: To be nice. Always.

Shiffrin is putting that axiom into action through "Kindness Wins," an organization that started earlier this year and acts as an umbrella for kindness initiatives. The foundation recently featured "Kindness In Crisis," an online auction led by Keys. Shiffrin, cross-country skier Jessie Diggins and mountain bike racer Kate Courtney. They raised money for COVID-19 relief through signed hats, uniforms and other memorabilia.

"Being kind to people," Shiffrin said, "that's something that doesn't go out of style."



NATHAN BELOW/AP

Music was always a bond Shiffrin shared with her late father, Jeff, who died on Feb. 2 after an accident at his home in Edwards, Colo.

NBA/COLLEGE BASKETBALL/MMA

One-third of NBA teams hold individual workouts

By TIM REYNOLDS
Associated Press

MIAMI — The NBA is now one-third of the way back, at least in terms of voluntary workouts.

With Miami re-openings its doors Wednesday, 10 of the league's 30 teams have gone forward with on-court individual workouts — the first permitted sessions since the league ordered teams to close their training facilities as part of the coronavirus pandemic response about two months ago.

Besides the Heat, the other teams that have opened so far are Portland, Cleveland, Milwaukee, Denver, Atlanta, Indiana, Sacramento, Toronto and Utah. More are expected in the coming days; among them, Orlando is close, and the Los Angeles Lakers are targeting Saturday.

And while there still is no decision about whether the season can resume — NBA Commissioner Adam Silver, according to a person with knowledge of the situation, has told the league's players he expects to make that call by mid-June at the latest — getting back to some semblance of work is generally being considered a positive step.

"We're kind of just feeling it out, playing it by ear, taking it day by day," said Toronto assistant coach Brittini Donaldson, who was in the gym with Raptors wing Malcolm Miller when the reigning NBA champions opened their facility again Monday. "Hopefully, you know, in a week we can start ramping it up a little more. But to start we're just keeping it very basic, very simple."

The league has very strict rules about these workouts; no head coaches can be involved, no more than four players can be in the facility at a time — the Raptors are limiting it to one player — and intense safety precautions must be taken before, during and after the sessions. When Donaldson was throwing passes to Miller, she did so while wearing a mask and gloves.

Heat captain Udonis Haslem was one of Miami's players to report back to work on Day 1 at their facility, though it wasn't his proudest moment. He sported a customized mask with the team's logo earlier Wednesday when he appeared at a food distribution drive that he helped organize near downtown Miami.

"This is first," Haslem said at the food drive. "This is most important."

Haslem said the workout started well, then he began to fade a bit toward the end. Like most NBA players, he's been going in individual workouts during the league's hia-

DID YOU KNOW?

As of Wednesday, 10 of the NBA's 30 teams have begun on-court individual workouts. The teams are: Miami, Portland, Cleveland, Milwaukee, Denver, Atlanta, Indiana, Sacramento, Toronto and Utah.

SOURCE: Associated Press



AARON GASH/AP

Giannis Antetokounmpo of the Milwaukee Bucks plays for one of 10 NBA teams that are holding individual workouts.

tus but said nothing replicates what it takes to get through an on-court workout.

Meanwhile, Florida Gov. Ron DeSantis let professional leagues know that the Sunshine State is ready to welcome them all if needed.

With Orlando often mentioned as a potential centralized site if the NBA resumes play, and it was one of the sites Silver told players late last week that he is under consideration, DeSantis said Wednesday that the state is putting a premium on the value of professional sports.

"Professional sports are going to be welcome in Florida," DeSantis said. "That may not be the case in every other state in this country, as we've seen. And so what I would tell commissioners of leagues is, if you have a team in an area where they just won't let them operate, we'll find a place for you here in the state of Florida, because we think it's important and we know that it can be done safely."

Associated Press Writer Ian Harrison in Toronto contributed.



JONATHAN HAYWARD, THE CANADIAN PRESS/AP

Glover Teixeira, left, fights Nikita Krylov during their light heavyweight match Sept. 14 at UFC Fight Night in Vancouver, British Columbia. Teixeira dominated Anthony Smith and finally stopped him with punches early in the fifth round Wednesday night.

Teixeira's upset win highlights UFC show

Associated Press

JACKSONVILLE, Fla. — Glover Teixeira dominated Anthony Smith and finally stopped him with punches early in the fifth round Wednesday night, earning an upset victory to cap the UFC's second show since returning to action amid the coronavirus pandemic.

Heavyweight veteran Ben Rothwell grabbed an entertaining split-decision victory over Ovince Saint Preux, and Drew Dober stopped fellow lightweight contender Alexander Hernandez with a second-round barrage of punches during the second of three UFC cards in eight days at a fan-free VStar Veterans Memorial Arena.

The promotion returned to action last Saturday with UFC 249 after an eight-week hiatus. The UFC established extensive protocols for health and safety in its return, and veteran fighter Jacare Souza was pulled off last weekend's show after he tested positive for COVID-19 along with two cornermen.

The second show went off without a positive COVID-19 test, and more masks were visible on UFC personnel inside and outside the cage Wednesday. Middleweight Karl Robinson's bout with Marvin Vettori was scrapped when Robinson was hospitalized overnight after he fell ill, but the illness was related to his weight cut and not coronavirus, according to the UFC.

The UFC's third show in Jacksonville is Saturday night on ESPN Plus, headlined by veteran heavyweights Alistair Overeem and Walt Harris.

The UFC hopes to begin holding fight cards back home in Las Vegas later this month, but is waiting for clearance from the Nevada Athletic Commission.

The 40-year-old Teixeira (31-7) was shockingly dominant in his fourth consecutive victory. The light heavyweight took control with strikes in the second round, and almost finished Smith several times while dominating the ensuing two rounds.

Teixeira finally ended it 1:04 into the final round, earning his first stoppage by punches since 2017.

"It's not how hard you hit," Teixeira said. "It's how hard you get hit and keep coming forward. ... The guy hits like a truck, but I moved my head a lot. I trained so hard."

Smith (33-15) was in the cage for the first time since he had to fight an intruder in his family home in Nebraska last month. He lost a close fight to Jon Jones for the light heavyweight title last year, and Teixeira was superior after the opening minutes.

Smith appeared to be battered beyond repair by the end of the third round, but his corner declined to stop the fight after the third or fourth rounds. His corner didn't stop the fight even when Smith told them: "My teeth are falling out."

The 38-year-old Rothwell (38-12) punctuated his 50th professional bout with a back-and-forth meeting with Saint Preux (24-14), a former light heavyweight title contender who moved up to heavyweight after losing three of his past five fights. Rothwell improved to 2-2 since returning from a two-year doping suspension.

Dober (23-9) is a training teammate of Justin Gaethje, who won the UFC interim lightweight title with an electrifying stoppage of Tony Ferguson in an electrifying standard with an exciting performance capped by a series of dynamic strikes to force a stoppage of Hernandez (11-3).

"Coming from a muay thai background, I had trouble fighting guys who constantly moved," Dober said. "I wasn't trying to hit hard. I was just trying to hit often. The more times you touch a guy on his chin, the more likely he's going to fall over."

Andrei Arlovski, the UFC's 41-year-old career leader in heavyweight victories, won a decision over Philippe Lins for his second victory in seven fights.

Earlier, Ricky Simon picked up the biggest win of his UFC career with a split-decision victory over veteran Ray Borg. The flyweights punctuated their lively fight with plenty of good-natured trash talk, which was audible on the television broadcast from the otherwise quiet arena.

NCAA delays date for draft entrants to return to school

Associated Press

INDIANAPOLIS — The NCAA is pushing back the deadline for early entrants to the NBA Draft to withdraw and return to school, though it will wait to set a new date.

The deadline was June 3, which would've come 10 days after the completion of the NBA scouting combine. But with the combine postponed amid the coronavirus pandemic, NCAA senior vice president of basketball Dan Gavitt said in a statement Wednesday that college sports' governing body won't set a new deadline until the NBA has determined its revised timeline for the pre-draft process.

"This modification is being made with the health and well-being of our student-athletes in mind, along with their ability to make the most informed decisions during this uncertain time," Gavitt said, specifically noting the postponement of the combine.

Gavitt said the NCAA will work with the National Association of Basketball Coaches to ensure the change "supports a player's decision-making process" on the draft while also allowing them to retain their college eligibility.

The NBA announced May 1 that it was postponing the draft lottery and combine scheduled for Chicago this month.

SPORTS

AUTO RACING

DARLINGTON

Big return

All eyes on NASCAR as racing resumes

By JENNA FRYER
Associated Press

CHARLOTTE, N.C.

NASCAR's season started with the Secret Service doing a security check on the firesuit-clad pole-sitter for the Daytona 500 and thousands of fans waiting hours in line to pass through a metal detector. When the season resumes on Sunday some 13 weeks later, drivers will have their temperatures taken as they enter Darlington Raceway in South Carolina and they will be wearing masks as they leave their isolated motorhomes and make their way to their cars. There will be no fans allowed inside.

Faced with many of its teams falling into financial ruin, NASCAR is waving the green flag on a plan it believes allows the series to safely return to racing. Only essential personnel will be permitted into the infield with strict guidelines on social distancing, access and protective clothing.

'Obviously there will be a huge microscope on how we're doing things, making sure it's done in a safe manner.'

Denny Hamlin
Daytona 500 winner

There will be no one to boo reigning series champion Kyle Busch, no pre-race concert, no pump and probably no flyover.

The seven races so far announced in May are at Darlington and Charlotte Motor Speedway, tracks within driving distance from teams' North Carolina bases. Four are in the elite Cup Series and the other three are lower-tier Xfinity and Truck Series races.

NASCAR hasn't raced since March 8 so Wednesday night events at Darlington and Charlotte are the only way to cram in some of the missed events.

These races will be nothing close to the weekly traveling circus NASCAR typically stages and participants will be figuring out a new normal when they pull up to the gate at Darlington.

"Just the unknowns about the procedures — you can read about them all

SEE RACING ON PAGE 51

Inside:

■ Safety protocols include remote Fox broadcast, Page 51

NASCAR will have a much different feel when it resumes this weekend. There will be no fans in the stands at Darlington Raceway, and the Fox broadcast team will not travel to South Carolina, instead calling the race from a studio in Charlotte.

TERRY RENN/A/P

TO OUR READERS

As the sports world pauses to join the rest of the world in fighting the coronavirus pandemic, you will see fewer sports stories in Stars and Stripes. We look forward to resuming our normal coverage when the leagues and governing bodies determine it is safe for athletes and fans to return to competition.

